

STARS AND STRIPES[®]

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Volume 2, No. 239 © EPSS 2004 MIDEAST EDITION

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 5, 2004

At least 14 killed by car bombs in Iraq

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Bush, Musharraf meet Page 8

President Bush greets Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf during their meeting in the Oval Office at The White House on Saturday. Bush praised Pakistan's efforts in the war on terrorism.

For some, loss of limb no reason to quit military

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Army Capt. David Rozelle runs in a race in New York. He lost his foot and part of his leg in Iraq but has been declared fit for duty and is slated to return to Iraq next year. In a shift in military culture, the U.S. armed forces recently announced new efforts to keep seriously wounded or disabled soldiers on active duty.

LORIE JEWELL, U.S. ARMY/LATWP

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News Tracker ... What's new with old news

Nation

Gay marriage dispute: Proponents of gay marriage told a judge that arguments over whether marriage is designed to foster procreation and whether gays make good parents are irrelevant to their case.

Twelve couples are suing to get California to overturn its statutory ban on gay marriage, a response to legal claims of two Christian groups.

In briefs filed Friday, the couples' lawyers pointed out to Superior Court Judge Richard Kramer that California's Legislature and Supreme Court have already settled the procreation-parenting question by allowing gays to have children through adoption or reproductive technology.

Kramer has set a Dec. 22 hearing on the constitutional issues raised in the couples' lawsuit and a companion case brought by the city of San Francisco.

Catholic abuse settlement: A record-breaking, \$100-million clergy sex abuse settlement between the Roman Catholic Diocese of Orange and 87 plaintiffs brought some measure of relief to long-suffering families Friday, but legal experts differed over whether the blockbuster deal would help resolve a huge backlog of cases in California.

The agreement, reached late Thursday and expected to be finalized as soon as Monday, surpasses the previous record of \$85 million awarded to 552 victims of clergy abuse in Boston in 2003, a participant in settlement negotiations said.

It wasn't clear how much of the settlement insurers would pay and how much the diocese would provide, but church officials said the deal would help resolve the diocese or require the closure of any of its 55 parishes.

Columbine investigation: A couple who say they warned authorities about one of the Columbine High School killers more than a year before the massacre want the Jefferson County district attorney and four other lawyers disbarred.

Randy and Judy Brown, who contacted the sheriff's office in 1997 and 1998 with complaints that teen gunman Eric Harris had bullied their son, say the attorneys failed to disclose materials that could have been used as evidence in lawsuits filed after the 1999 assault on the high school.

They asked the Colorado Supreme Court judiciary review committee on Thursday for investigations against attorneys who attended a meeting two days after the April 20, 1999, attack in which Harris and Dylan Klebold killed 13 people before committing suicide.

Robert Blake trial: A lawyer monitoring the investigation into the theft of a computer containing key records of actor Robert Blake's defense said Friday the murder trial may have to be delayed.

James Blatt, the special master appointed to monitor the Los Angeles police investigation into the burglary, said the theft raises questions about whether the trial can start Monday, as scheduled.

Los Angeles Superior Court Judge Darlene E. Schemp delayed a pre-trial hearing to allow Schwartzbach to inventory missing materials and report back to court. That is the same day the judge told jurors to report for the start of trial.

Tiger escape lawsuit: Two people have filed suit against an animal trainer and a circus after a tiger escaped from its cage last year and caused a multi-car accident they claim left them with brain injuries.

New York City police detective Maureen O'Leary and Quisyo's Wanda Colon of Queens are each seeking \$30 million in dam-



Scott Peterson case: Joe and Janey Peterson leave the San Mateo Superior Court house in Redwood City, Calif., on Friday after Joe, Scott Peterson's half brother, took the stand in the sentencing phase of Scott Peterson.

Peterson, 32, faces either the death penalty or life in prison without the possibility of parole for the 2002 murders. Peterson's lawyers told Judge Alfred A. Deluchi they planned to call about 20 more witnesses. Deluchi told jurors to expect testimony into Tuesday, possibly even Wednesday, before closing arguments.

ages, according to the lawsuits.

The 7-year-old, 450-pound Bengal tiger, Apollo, escaped as it was being transferred from a small cage to a larger one in Queens last July. Apollo strolled past a church picnic and into a residential neighborhood, then crossed the Jackie Robinson Parkway, where the collisions occurred.

Segregation amendment: A statewide recount showed that Alabama narrowly voted to keep language in the state constitution supporting segregation and poll taxes, according to unofficial totals released Friday.

Secretary of State Nancy Worley said voters defeated the amendment by just 1,850 votes out of more than 1.3 million cast.

The original vote count showed the amendment lost by the same margin, or 0.13 percent.

Worley cautioned that the totals are unofficial until the votes are certified next week.

The amendment would have erased unneeded language from Alabama's constitution that required segregated schools and poll taxes, which were designed to keep blacks from voting.

Elizabeth Smart case: A judge ordered a new round of competency evaluations in the Elizabeth Smart kidnapping case Friday after the suspect broke out in a Christmas hymn at a court hearing.

Judge Judith Atherton's order came after Brian David Mitchell closed his eyes and sang, "Oh come, oh come, Emmanuel," the name he used as a street preacher.

After about 40 seconds of the tune, the judge ordered Mitchell from the courtroom.

Mitchell's lawyers said he had grown increasingly delusional in jail since Septem-

ber, when the judge declared him competent after seven months of dueling evaluations.

World

IRA, Northern Ireland talks: The Irish Republican Army still hasn't contacted the Northern Ireland disarmament chief, raising doubts about the outlawed group's alleged commitment to a new peace deal, the major Protestant leader declared Saturday.

Democratic Unionist leader Ian Paisley — whose uncompromising British Protestant party is resisting pressure to form an administration alongside Sinn Fein, the IRA-linked party backed by most Catholics — said he wouldn't revive power-sharing unless the IRA disarms and shuts down.

The British and Irish prime ministers, Tony Blair and Bertie Ahern, say they have received assurances from Sinn Fein that the IRA would disarm speedily and cease all activities as part of any agreement.

France, U.S. custody battle: A 4-year-old girl at the center of a trans-Atlantic custody battle that drew attention at the highest levels of French government was turned over to her American father on Friday.

An appeals court ruled hours earlier that David Washington, from New York state, had custody over his daughter Charlotte. The child came into national focus this fall when French police scaled the walls of her nursery school in southern France and barged into her classroom in a bid to return her to her father.

Teachers hid the child and the police left empty-handed, but Prime Minister Jean-Pierre Raffarin expressed shock at what he called their "unacceptable" behavior.

Friday's appeals court decision returned to the May 13 ruling, saying there "was no danger" found in giving the father custody and he could remove his daughter from foster care, said the girl's court-appointed lawyer, Joelle Tosca-Zonino.

Business

Enron case: Nearly one-third of potential Houston-area jurors surveyed on behalf of former Enron Corp. CEO Jeffrey Skilling said they associate his name with words like "evil" and "pie," but the two-thirds who don't show he and company founder Kenneth Lay can face a fair jury at home, federal prosecutors said in a court filing Friday.

The government minimized Skilling's argument — supported by Lay and former top Enron accountant Richard Causey, the third defendant in what is expected to be the blockbuster of Enron-related criminal cases — that the yet-unscheduled trial must be moved outside of Texas to select an impartial jury.

U.S. District Judge Sim Lake has yet to rule on the issue.

War on terrorism

Germans arrest terror suspect: German authorities Saturday arrested a fourth man on suspicion of involvement in an al-Qaida-linked group's alleged plot to attack Iraqi Prime Minister Ayad Allawi during his visit to Berlin this week.

Meanwhile, the three Iraqis already in custody for their alleged roles in the plot denied the accusations against them during questioning Saturday by a judge, Der Spiegel newswire reported Saturday. The judge will decide whether to issue an arrest warrant against them.

The fourth suspect, a man with Lebanese citizenship, was arrested in Berlin on suspicion of supporting a foreign terrorist organization, federal prosecutors' spokesman Hartmut Schneider said.

Stories and photos from wire services



Mitchell

Bombs in Baghdad, Mosul kill at least 14

Iraq attacks kill 4 servicemembers, U.S. military says

By SAMEER N. YACUB

The Associated Press

BAGHDAD — Suicide car bombs struck Iraqi police and Kurdish militiamen in Baghdad and northern Iraq on Saturday, killing at least 14 people, wounding 67, and again demonstrating the lethal reach of Iraq's burgeoning insurgency just weeks ahead of crucial elections set for Jan. 30.

More than 40 Iraqis have been killed in the last two days alone.

Meanwhile, the insurgents' deadly campaign against American troops continued. Two U.S. soldiers were killed by roadside bombs in Baghdad and north of the capital Saturday, and the military announced two other Americans died in a suicide car bombing of their post near the Jordanian border the day before.

Saturday's car bombs in Baghdad went off nearly simultaneously at about 9:30 a.m. by a police station across the street from a checkpoint leading to the heavily fortified green Zulfikar House, the offices of Iraq's interim government and several foreign missions.

Bursts of automatic fire followed the thunderous detonation, which shook windows several hundred yards away in buildings on the opposite side of the Tigris River.

Health officials said the bodies of seven people killed by the blast and 59 wounded were brought to two Baghdad hospitals.

Officials said most of the victims were police officers, but the identities of all the dead were not yet known.

Adel Hassan, a policeman who survived the attack with head injuries, said at a hospital crammed with victims that a "suicide car bomber sped into our place [the police station] ... and then there was an explosion."

The attack came a day after a highly coordinated assault on a police station west of Baghdad in which insurgents killed 16 police, looted the station's armory and freed dozens of prisoners.



U.S. Army 1st Battalion, 24th Infantry soldiers raid a home after taking sniper fire in Mosul, Iraq, on Saturday, Nov. 20, after 70 insurgents tried to ambush a U.S. patrol using roadside bombs, rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire. After regrouping, U.S. and Iraqi forces launched an assault, killing more than two dozen insurgents.

"We are moving toward the elections while the insurgents, terrorists and the former Baath regime members will try to destroy the security and they will try to build an environment that the people feel that there is no security," Iraqi Defense Ministry official Broska Noory Shausse said.

In the northern city of Mosul, a suicide bomber exploded his vehicle alongside a bus carrying pro-government Kurdish militiamen, killing at least seven and wounding eight, an official said. Along with Iraq's majority Shiites, Kurds back the upcoming elections, and the bombing may have been an attempt to drag them into a civil war.

The militiamen were being brought in from the mainly Kurdish city of Irbil to Mosul, where U.S. and Iraqi forces have been battling insurgents who staged an uprising last month, attacking police stations and government offices of the Kurds.

In fierce fighting in the city on Friday, gunmen tried to storm four police stations but were repelled, the U.S. military said. About 70 guerrillas also ambushed a U.S.

patrol with roadside bombs, rocket-propelled grenades and small-arms fire. After regrouping, U.S. and Iraqi forces struck back on insurgent positions, killing more than two dozen fighters, the military said.

In an eastern district of Baghdad, a roadside bomb killed an American soldier and wounded five others Saturday, the military said. Another bomb near the town of Ghalabiyah, 6 miles west of the insurgent hotbed of Baquba, north of Baghdad, hit a truck in U.S. military convoy, killing a soldier and wounding another, Master Sgt. Robert Powell said.

A suicide car bomb hit an American forward operating base near Iraq's border with Jordan on Friday, killing two U.S. servicemembers, the U.S. command said Saturday. A Marine spokesman said the attack had been directed at members of the 1st Marine Expeditionary Force.

Iraq closed its Karamah border crossing into Jordan until further notice, Jordanian officials said Saturday.

Also Saturday, a hospital official said the

U.S. deaths in Iraq

The Associated Press

As of Friday, at least 1,265 members of the U.S. military have died since the beginning of the Iraq war in March 2003, according to an Associated Press count. At least 988 died as a result of hostile action, the Defense Department said. The figures include three military civilians.

The AP count is five higher than the Defense Department's tally, last updated Friday.

The British military has reported 74 deaths; Italy, 19; Poland, 13; Spain, 11; Ukraine, nine; Bulgaria, seven; Slovakia, three; Estonia, Thailand and the Netherlands, two each; and Denmark, El Salvador, Hungary and Latvia have reported one death each.

Since May 1, 2003, when President Bush declared that major combat operations in Iraq had ended, 1,127 U.S. military members have died, according to AP's count. That includes at least 879 deaths resulting from hostile action, according to the military's numbers.

The latest deaths reported by the military:

■ One U.S. soldier was killed Friday in an explosion near Kirkuk.

■ One U.S. soldier died Friday in an explosion in northern Baghdad.

The latest identification reported by the military:

■ Marine Cpl. Bryan S. Wilson, 22, Otterbein, Ind., died Wednesday in a vehicle accident in Anbar province; assigned to 2nd Battalion, 11th Marine Regiment, 1st Marine Division, 1st Marine Expeditionary Force, Camp Pendleton, Calif.

bodies of four slain men wearing Iraqi National Guards uniforms were found in northeastern Iraq, the military said Friday, made Friday in Tal Afar, brings to at least 70 the number of bodies discovered in and around that town and Mosul, about 30 miles to the south, since Nov. 18.

Police in the northern city of Samarra also came under attack Saturday. Mortars were fired at a station after midnight, wounding two officers. Gunmen injured two policemen in another attack at about 10 a.m., according to police Maj. Sadoon Ahmed Matroud.

Abizaid defends sending more U.S. troops to Iraq

By ADNAN MALIK

The Associated Press

MANAMA, Bahrain — The United States will boost its forces in Iraq to a record number of 150,000 in coming weeks because inexperienced Iraqi troops cannot ensure security for next month's national elections, the commander of U.S. forces in Iraq said Saturday.

Gen. John Abizaid, head of U.S. Central Command, said "it had been our hope" that troop increases before Jan. 30 election would consist mostly of Iraqis.

But "while the Iraqi troops are larger in number than they used to be, those forces have to be seasoned more, trained more, so it's necessary to bring more American forces," he said.

The United States currently has about 138,000 troops in Iraq. On Wednesday, the Pentagon



Abizaid

gime.

Most of that increase will come through extending until March the tour of duty of more than 10,000 soldiers and Marines originally scheduled to return home in January.

Abizaid said the U.S. military presence needed strengthening "to ensure that there is enough security for the elections." In the first popular vote since Saddam's

ouster, Iraqis will choose a 275-member assembly that will write a permanent constitution.

There have been calls to postpone the election because of daily insurgent attacks, but the United States and interim Iraqi government have insisted it proceed on time.

"We have to understand that the elections are not going to be perfect, but it is important that elections happen," Abizaid said on the sidelines of a regional security conference in Bahrain.

Iraqi National Security Adviser Qasim Dawoud, who also attended the conference, welcomed the increase in American troops.

"Any delay in this election means giving an encouragement and a gift to the terrorists, who are trying to stop the movement toward a new democratic Iraq," he said. "Iraqis are ready for the election, and we are taking every

measure to increase security."

In September, President Bush said Iraq's government commanded almost 100,000 trained and combat-ready Iraqis, including police, national guardsmen and army soldiers. He predicted then the total would rise to 125,000 by Dec. 31.

Abizaid said those forces were "constantly improving," but they needed more mechanized forces and more leaders.

"When Iraqi military officers of senior rank get appointed to positions of responsibility, that's when I think the whole organization will start to come together," Abizaid said, referring to the Iraqi Army and National Guard.

Abizaid also said Iraq's neighbors — specifically Syria and Iran — must stop groups within their borders who are trying to destabilize Iraq. However, he made a rare U.S. acknowledgment of im-

provement, saying, "Things are better now than they were a month ago, but things are still not good enough."

Syria hosts many members of Saddam's regime who fund the insurgency, Abizaid said.

"We have asked the Syrian government to put a stop to that," he added.

In Iran, he said, some people were helping rebels such as Shiite leader Muqtada al-Sadr.

"All governments that border Iraq should assist the Iraqis in achieving stability ... without influencing the internal dynamics of the politics," Abizaid said.

A high-level summit on Iraq's security wrapped up Wednesday in Tehran, Iran, with Iraq's neighbors vowing to control their borders and stop the money transfers that finance terror activities.

Volume and variety make Balad enjoyable

Air traffic controllers at air base 'get a little bit of everything'

BY RON JENSEN
Stars and Stripes

BALAD AIR BASE, Iraq — The aircraft that fly into Balad are big and small, American and foreign, slow and fast. Many can even hover in midair.

For the folks in the control tower, the activity and variety is heaven.

"There's never a dull moment," said Master Sgt. Fred Erolin, chief controller with the 332nd Expeditionary Operations Support Squadron.

A few hundred times a day, an aircraft leaves the base or arrives. It might be a lumbering C-5 Galaxy or a speedy F-16 Fighting Falcon. It might be a Chinook helicopter or an RC-130 Army reconnaissance plane. Or it could be a pilotless remote control aircraft.

Shoot, it might even be an odd-looking Russian cargo plane.

"It's what makes this place that much more challenging," said Erolin, who is from Nellis Air Force Base, Nev.

When Spc. Erin Korich and Spc. Brett Cole arrived in March with 12 other Army air traffic controllers from Company B of the 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment at Katterbach, Germany, they were masters with helicopters but novices with fixed wing aircraft.

"We had no real life experience with fixed wing, only [during training] at the schoolhouse," said Cole. "At this point, we're probably the most experienced controllers in the Army. Nobody else deals with what we do."

"It took me a month, month and a half before I felt completely comfortable," said Korich.

The air base serves the largest supply

hub in the Iraqi theater. Logistics Support Area Anaconda is a lifeline for nearly 140,000 troops battling insurgents in the country.

Erolin, who has worked at Air Force fighter bases, said this one tops them all for the sheer number of aircraft movements.

"It's four or five times busier," he said. But it is not just the volume, he said, that makes it such a challenging and enjoyable job for controllers. It is also the variety of aircraft.

"You're talking about different air speeds," he said. "One of the hardest jobs for a controller to do is sequence the aircraft."

If fast-moving fighters, slow Sherpas and some helicopters all converge on the base at the same time, the controller has to line them up in a way that will get all down as quickly as possible.

"I've always told my people, this is not science, this is art," said Erolin, a controller for 15 years. "Air traffic control is pure art."

Of course, they are creating this art in the middle of a country wracked by war. Although the threat has been quiet lately, the base has been a bull's-eye for the enemy outside the wire with mortars and rockets.

As a result, controllers have to be on the lookout for any attempt to shoot at the aircraft coming or going outside the base perimeter.

"You have to maintain a very high level of SA, we call it — situational awareness," said Erolin.

If an aircraft gets shot at, it will take evasive action. The controller must be ready to tell the pilot if other aircraft are in the area and tell the other aircraft what has just happened, he said.

Also, because the control tower is the tallest thing for miles around on the flat desert landscape, the controllers are valuable assets in noting where mortar rounds and rockets land on base.

Controllers let the command post know if they spot a cloud of dust or smoke from an impact, Erolin said. Some have landed so close they've rattled the windows of the tower.

But, he said, "we were working aircraft still."

The equipment used in the tower is tactical gear that belongs to the Army. The soldiers from Katterbach have become the experts in the tower, having seen two Air Force rotations of controllers come and go. The flying service does four-month rotations in the theater. The Army does 12-month tours.

"These guys, they're the continuity for us," said Master Sgt. Brian Brannen, from Luke Air Force Base, Ariz. "They're the ones we go to."

Cole said, "We've trained a lot of people here."

While the controllers talked, they also moved various aircraft in and out of the base.

A C-17 left. A remote-controlled Predator surveillance aircraft landed and rolled across the runway. The Army sent off one of its C-23 Sherpas. A Russian cargo jet came in and an Air Force C-130 requested fuel before it left.

While this might be a day to remember at a base that normally sees mainly fighters or tankers or cargo aircraft, the mixed batch of aircraft didn't raise an eyebrow in Balad.

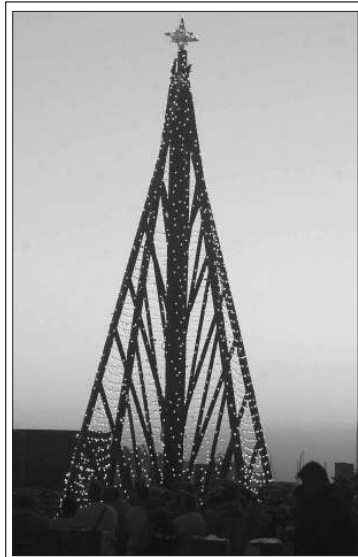
"Here," said Brannen, "you get a little bit of everything."

E-mail Ron Jensen at: ejensen@mail.strips.osd.mil.



RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Spc. Erin Korich, an air traffic controller with the 3rd Battalion, 58th Aviation Regiment from Katterbach, Germany, talks to a pilot from the tower on Balad Air Base, Iraq. Army and Air Force controllers work side by side directing a variety of aircraft into the base.



Troops find holiday cheer



PHOTOS BY RON JENSEN/Stars and Stripes

Left: A Christmas tree made from lumber and standing 41 feet tall was lit Saturday at dusk on Balad Air Base, Iraq. The tree was designed by Albert Pellot of DynCorp, built by Air Force volunteers and decorated with 4,800 lights. A ceremony to light the tree included songs from the Reindeer Band and a prayer, but was interrupted by a mortar attack before Santa Claus' arrival. Santa arrived after the all-clear was sounded following the mortar attack. **Above:** Capt. Diane Strohle, left, 1st Lt. Bethany Brown, center, and Airman 1st Class Pamela Bigham were part of the Reindeer Band that performed at the tree-lighting ceremony on Balad Air Base.

"I'm going to take a spare leg with me to war"

Medical retirement no longer automatic for servicemembers disabled in combat

BY ANNE HULL
The Washington Post

WASHINGTON — After an anti-tank mine destroyed his foot and part of his leg in Iraq, Capt. David Rozelle, 31, considered his future. In another era, the commander of a cavalry troop would have been heralded for his bravery and likely issued a medical retirement.

But Rozelle experienced a different message while hospitalized at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. Nearly every officer who visited his room cheered on a comeback. The Texas native spent the next nine months swimming, weight lifting, mountain biking and getting used to running with an artificial leg. He passed the necessary physical fitness tests given by the Army medical board and was declared fit for duty. Next year, Rozelle is slated to deploy to Iraq as the commander of a 3rd Armored Cavalry Regiment headquarters troop.

"I see so many young men that say, 'Hell, yeah, I want to continue to serve and fight,'" Rozelle said.

In a shift in military culture, the U.S. armed forces have recently announced new efforts to keep seriously wounded or disabled soldiers on active duty. Although there is no clear written policy, the sentiment is being echoed down from the White House.

"When we're talking about forced discharge, we're talking about another age and another" military, President Bush told wounded soldiers at Walter Reed last year. "This is a new age, and this is a new [military]. Today, if wounded service members want to remain in uniform and can do the job, the military tries to help them stay."

Military commanders cite ad-

vances in medical technology as the main reason for the shift. Better prosthetics — such as Rozelle's \$7,000 leg — are allowing some of the wounded to regain their fitness and continue to serve. Others say the military's new attitude toward the disabled is simply mirroring society's.

But one observer says the change is also practical. In an era of constant deployment, the Pentagon needs a more flexible and diversified workforce, said Laura Miller, a military sociologist with the Rand Corp.

"Part of this is a response to the stress on the all-volunteer forces due to the war on terror," Miller said. "And part of it is adapting to future warfare: smaller expeditionary forces that can respond to a variety of missions, including peacekeeping and humanitarian. Why throw away someone with years of training and expertise, only to re-train someone new?"

Although much of the nation's attention has focused on the more than 1,250 U.S. troops who have died in Iraq, more than 9,300 have been wounded, and the number climbs daily. Various service branches say they are trying to do a better job helping the wounded through the paperwork and medical board evaluations, but backlogs remain.

In April, the Army formed the Disabled Soldier Support System, or DSS, a resource network available to soldiers who are 30 percent or more disabled — paralysis or the loss of a limb or an eye. The DSS helps soldiers weigh their options regarding retirement or trying to stay on active

"Our view is that once a soldier, always a soldier, and the Army is looking for ways to keep a number of them on active duty rather than medically retiring them."

Lt. Gen. Franklin Hagenbeck
Army deputy chief of staff for personnel

duty. The Army estimates that almost 900 of those injured in Iraq are eligible for the program.

Amputations account for 2.4 percent of all wounded in action in the Iraq war — twice the rate in World War I and World War II, said Chuck Scoville, the amputee program manager of Walter Reed. Sophisticated body armor and medical techniques in the battlefield have preserved lives but not necessarily limbs. Available figures through Aug. 31 show that Army hospitals have treated 138 amputees from Iraq.

About 90 percent of severely injured soldiers decide after a year to take medical retirement, according to an Army estimate. Those who want to stay on active duty must prove that they can meet certain physical requirements, many may be deemed unfit to return to their original jobs.

Several officers who spoke recently at the annual meeting of the Association of the United States Army emphasized the more welcoming policy toward retaining disabled soldiers.

"Our view is that once a soldier, always a soldier, and the Army is looking for ways to keep a number of them on active duty rather than medically retiring them," said Lt. Gen. Franklin Hagenbeck, the Army's deputy chief of staff for personnel. He has pledged to personally review the case of any military amputee who feels unfairly treated.

The dictates from the top do not always trickle down to the company or unit level.

Spc. Garth Stewart lost his leg in a land-mine explosion in Iraq. After receiving a prosthesis at Walter Reed, he set a goal of returning to his job as a mortar man with the 3rd Infantry Division. At Fort Benning, Stewart, 23, completed hand-to-hand combat school and unloaded dozens of 100-pound ammo boxes in field exercises.

But running long distances was difficult. His stump would swell and blister. He was reassigned to work in the gymnasium.

"The Department of Defense might say one thing, but there's al-

ways going to be some brand-spanking-new commander out there, and the last thing he wants is a liability," said Stewart, who took medical retirement last month and is applying to college.

David Autry, spokesman for Disabled American Veterans, one of the nation's largest veterans service groups, said he wishes the government would focus more on making sure that transitioning service members and veterans receive quality health care and timely access to benefits.

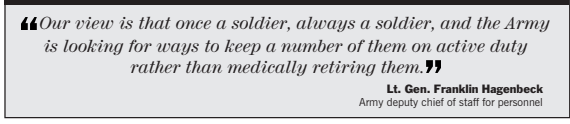
But Autry applauds the Pentagon's new spirit.

"I suspect that there will be wonderful success stories and fairly miserable failures," he said. "You've got a soldier with a \$20,000 computerized leg. If he gets deployed back to Iraq, if it gets sand and crud in it, it gives out, who's gonna fix it?"

Rozelle will see for himself when he returns to Iraq in the spring.

"I'm going to take a spare leg with me to war," he said. "If I need one, I'll e-mail my prosthetist and say, 'Send me a leg.'"

Army Sgt. Matt DeWitt, who was injured in Iraq, tries out a prosthetic at Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington. Advances in medical technology and changes in the military are allowing some of the wounded to continue to serve.
GERALD MARTEAU
The Washington Post



Pentagon: Lab had means to make chemical agent

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — A chemical weapons laboratory that U.S. forces found last week in Fallujah as they chased out insurgents had chemicals and other paraphernalia to make deadly hydrogen cyanide, Pentagon officials said Friday.

The Americans also found what Army Brig. Gen. David Rodriguez called "a mujahedeen chemical and biological book" outlining instructions and formulas for an-

thrax, chemical blood agents and explosive materials.

Iraq's national security adviser, Qasem Dawoud, reported the find Nov. 25. He said in Baghdad, Iraq's capital, that the laboratory was discovered in the southwestern sector of Fallujah, where pockets of insurgents were holding out against Marines who entered the rebel-

lous city on Nov. 8.

Rodriguez told reporters Friday that the lab's chemicals, including sodium cyanide and hydrochloric acid, which if combined could be used to make hydrogen cyanide. That is a potentially lethal chemical agent.

Other officials said later the significance of the discoveries was not yet clear.

Rodriguez said other materials and documents found in Fallujah over the past few weeks, including insurgents' lists of telephone numbers, will aid U.S. and Iraqi forces in their pursuit of the insurgents elsewhere in Iraq.

"All that information that we gained out there we believe will help us in the future," he said.

He said information might show "what is happening with the insurgency and how they operate."

Navy investigates SEALs' photos of detainees

BY SETH HETTNERA

The Associated Press

CORONADO, Calif. — The U.S. military has launched a criminal investigation into photographs that appear to show Navy SEALs in Iraq sitting on hooded and handcuffed detainees, and photos of what appear to be bloodied prisoners, one with a gun to his head.

Some of the photos have date stamps suggesting they were taken in May 2003, which could make them the earliest evidence of possible abuse of prisoners in Iraq. The far more brutal practices photographed in Abu Ghraib prison occurred months later.

An Associated Press reporter found more than 40 of the pictures among hundreds in an album posted on a commercial photo-sharing Web site by a woman who said her husband brought them from Iraq after his tour of duty. It is unclear who took the pictures, which the Navy said it was investigating after the AP furnished copies to get comment for this story.

These and other photos found by the AP appear to show the immediate aftermath of raids on civilian homes. One man is lying on his back with a boot on his chest.

A mug shot shows a man with an automatic weapon pointed at his head and a gloved thumb jabbed into his throat. In many photos, faces have been blacked out.

"These photographs raise a number of important questions regarding the treatment of prisoners of war (POW) and detainees," Navy Cmdr. Jeff Bender, a spokesman for the Naval Special Warfare Command in Coronado, said in a written response to questions. "I can assure you that the matter will be thoroughly investigated."

The photos were turned over to the Naval Criminal Investigative Service, which instructed the SEAL command to determine whether they show any serious crimes, Bender said Friday. That investigation will determine the identities of the troops and what they were doing in the photos.

Some of the photos recall aspects of the images from Abu Ghraib, which led to charges against seven soldiers accused of humiliating and assaulting prisoners. In several of the photos obtained by the AP, grinning men wearing U.S. flags on their uniforms, and one with a tattoo of a SEAL, a Trident, take turns sitting or lying atop what appear to be three hood-



A photo found posted on a commercial photo-sharing Web site appears to show an Iraqi detainee constrained by U.S. military personnel. The Navy has launched a criminal investigation into the SEALs' photographs, which appear to show commandos sitting on hooded and handcuffed detainees.

ed and handcuffed men in the bed of a pickup truck.

A reporter found the photos, which since have been removed from public view, while researching the prosecution of a group of SEALs who allegedly beat prisoners and photographed one of them in degrading positions. Those photos, taken with a SEAL's personal camera, haven't been publicly released.

Though they have alarmed SEAL commanders, the photographs found by the AP do not necessarily show anything illegal, according to experts in the laws of war who reviewed photos at the AP's request.

Gary Solis, a former Marine Corps prosecutor and judge who teaches at the United States Military Academy, said the images showed "stupid" and "juvenile" behavior — but not necessarily a crime.

John Hutson, a retired rear admiral who served as the Navy's Judge Advocate General from 1997 to 2000, said they suggested possible Geneva Convention violations. Those international laws

prohibit souvenir photos of prisoners of war.

"It's pretty obvious that these pictures were taken largely as war trophies," Hutson said. "Once you start allowing that kind of behavior, the next step is to start posting the POWs in order to get even better pictures."

At a minimum, the pictures violate Navy regulations that prohibit photographing prisoners other than for intelligence or administrative purposes, according to Bender, the SEALs spokesman.

All Naval Special Warfare personnel were told that prior to deployment, he said, but "it is obvious from some of the photographs that this policy was not adhered to." The images were posted to the Internet site Smugmug.com. The woman who posted them told the AP they were on the camera her husband brought back from Iraq. She said her husband has returned to Iraq. He does not appear in photos with prisoners.

The Navy goes to great lengths to protect the identities and whereabouts of its 2,400 SEALs — which stands for Navy Sea,

Air, Land — many of whom have classified counterterrorism missions around the globe.

"Some of these photos clearly depict faces and names of Naval Special Warfare personnel, which could put them or their families at risk," Bender said.

Out of safety concerns, the AP is not identifying the woman who posted the photos.

The wife said she was upset that a reporter was able to view the album, which includes family snapshots. Hundreds of other photos depict everyday military life in Iraq, some showing commandos standing around piles of weapons and waving wads of cash.

The images were found through the online search engine Google.

The same search today leads to the Smugmug.com Web page, which now prompts the user for a password. Nine scenes from the SEAL camp remain in Google's archived version of the page.

"I think it's fair to assume that it would be very hard for most consumers to know all the ways the search engines can discover Web pages," said Smugmug spokesman Chris MacAskill.

Commander must testify about prison conditions

The Associated Press

FORT HOOD, Texas — A military judge on Saturday ordered the former commander of U.S. prisons in Iraq to testify at the trial of a soldier who says he was ordered to abuse detainees at Abu Ghraib.

Caj. James Pohl, the judge, said Brig. Gen. Janice Karpinski's testimony at the trial of Sgt. Javon Davis would be limited to conditions at Abu Ghraib and the interaction there between guards and military interrogators.

Davis told investigators that military intelligence personnel appeared to approve of the abuse. "We were told they had different rules," he told investigators, according to an Army report.

Karpinski has denied knowing about any mistreatment of prisoners until photographs were made public at the end of April showing hooded and naked prisoners being tormented by their U.S. captors.

In an interview with The Associated Press, Karpinski said a "conspiracy" among top U.S. commandos left her "in the dark" for the abuses at Abu Ghraib.

A report issued by an independent panel of nonmilitary experts blamed Karpinski for leadership failures that "helped set the conditions at the prison which led to the abuses."

Charges against Davis, a native of Roselle, N.J., include conspiracy to maltreat detainees, assault, dereliction of duty and lying in official statements.

Harman, of Lorton, Va., is accused of photographing some of the abuse, participating in sexual humiliation of naked prisoners, and placing wires on the hands of a detainee and telling him he would be electrocuted if he fell off a box.

Granger is set to appear in court on Monday. He is expected to seek dismissal of charges on grounds of undue command influence.

Coalition forces quicken training for Afghan army

The Associated Press

KABUL, Afghanistan — The United States and its allies stepped up training of Afghanistan's new army on Saturday to complete by 2007 a force that is supposed to prevent the country from falling again under the sway of extremists or warlords, a senior official said.

Starting Saturday, five battalions, or more than 3,000 troops, will be trained at the same time, instead of four previously, and up from two at the start of 2004, said

Col. Bob Sharp, the British chief of staff of the Office of Military Cooperation, which coordinates the training.

Planners aim to bring the army to its projected strength of 70,000 by September 2007, a target threatened by initial problems retaining recruits unhappy at long spells away from their families and poor pay. The force currently numbers about 15,000.

"I see the driver being the means to deliver stability to Afghanistan quicker, rather than any agenda to reduce U.S. forces

any quicker than may be possible under normal arrangements," Sharp said.

The multifaceted army is replacing the regional and factional militias which helped the U.S. rout the Taliban in late 2001.

Some 24,000 militiamen have so far been disarmed under the U.N.-sponsored peace plan drawn up after the deadline Islamic militia's defeat. ANA units already have fought against Taliban insurgents in the south and east of the country and are starting to deploy permanently from the capital, Kabul, to five regional cities, extending the

authority of U.S.-backed President Hamid Karzai into the lawless countryside.

The United States, France and Britain are among the chief sponsors of the new army, which is set to include 45,000 ground troops and its own air corps.

U.S. commanders say they expect to maintain their forces at around the current level of 18,000 for at least 12-18 months, though the force could be reduced to the separate 8,000-strong NATO security force being planned expansion into the west of Afghanistan.

Santa brings smiles to seniors



Photo courtesy of U.S. Air Force

Doris Peachy, left, and Pam Fritz receive gifts from Santa, played by Master Sgt. Deborah Francavilla, 727th Air Mobility Squadron, at the 23rd annual Senior Citizen's Christmas Luncheon, sponsored by the Top 3 organization at RAF Mildenhall, England. The luncheon, held on Wednesday at the Galaxy Club, was attended by more than 100 local seniors and 40 volunteers from the organization made up of the top three ranks of enlisted members. The 3½-hour event featured a traditional Christmas dinner, bingo, Christmas carols and a visit from good old St. Nicholas.

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Rumsfeld agrees to stay as secretary of defense

BY TERENCE HUNT
 The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Defense Secretary Donald H. Rumsfeld's future has been in doubt amid spreading violence and U.S. deaths in Iraq.

Whether he would remain in his job was one of the last big question marks about President Bush's second-term Cabinet.

The issue was decided this week in an Oval Office meeting where Bush asked Rumsfeld to remain and the secretary accepted, a senior administration official said Friday.

Rumsfeld's tenure has been marked by unanticipated postwar violence in Iraq and more than 1,250 U.S. deaths, as well as enormous increases in spending on the military after the 9-11 attacks.

Describing Bush's decision, the administration official said the president believed Rumsfeld was "the right person at this moment in our history in fighting the war on terror to lead our armed forces."

The secretary's future had been the subject of much speculation, after revelations about abuses at Abu Ghraib and other U.S.-run prisons in Iraq. Though Bush steadfastly backed his defense chief — one of the more



Donald Rumsfeld

hawkish members of his administration — the acerbic 72-year-old has many detractors in Congress and the military.

It had been widely believed at the Pentagon that Rumsfeld wanted to stay on, at least for a time, in order to oversee the continuing transition in Iraq and shepherd his plan for a fundamental transformation and modernization of the U.S. military.

Rumsfeld is the oldest person to serve as secretary of defense.

He also was the youngest, having served during the Ford administration in the mid-1970s. He has a longtime government relationship with Vice President Dick Cheney, dating back to the Ford years.

Rumsfeld took intense criti-

cism from members of Congress last spring when the Abu Ghraib prisoner abuse scandal became public. He told the Senate Armed Services Committee that he would quit if he thought that would help but not simply to satisfy the administration's political enemies.

Rumsfeld said he would take the blame for the scandal. After the completion and publication of several in-depth investigations, the pressure for him to resign abated during the summer.

In recent interviews Rumsfeld had refused to talk about his future, except to say that he remained committed to transforming the military to make it more capable of fighting wars of the 21st century.

Many have criticized him for failing to foresee the insurgency that has taken thousands of Iraqi lives and killed hundreds of American troops since Baghdad was toppled in April 2003. Rumsfeld has acknowledged that the strength and resilience of the insurgency were underestimated.

It was unclear Friday how long Rumsfeld's top deputy, Paul Wolfowitz, and his top policy adviser, Douglas Feith, would remain.

Rumsfeld's spokesman, Lawrence H. Rich, said on Friday that Feith had told his staff he intended to stay for a period.

Sailors who hit books better careers

BY LEO SHANE III
 AND SANDRA JONTZ

Stars and Stripes

WASHINGTON — Enlisted sailors may have to hit the books if they want to reach the highest ranks.

A new Navy military education policy, which in part guides professional development for all sailors, outlines general goals for emphasizing continuing education and college-level degrees for all enlisted personnel.

Ed Barker, spokesman for the Naval Education and Training Command, said officials hope by 2010 to mandate associate's and bachelor's degrees for sailors advancing to senior ranks, though no specific timetables or benchmarks have been set.

"The goal is to tell a young [sailor] now that if he plans to make senior chief, he should include education," he said. "There is going to come a time when, if you don't have that degree, it could hurt you."

In announcing the education priorities last month, Vice Adm. Alfred G. Harms Jr. said higher education is essential for enlisted servicemen "to better prepare them to operate tomorrow's fleet" and to ensure they are prepared to take over leadership roles in the Navy.

Currently, service members being promoted to the highest enlisted ranks must graduate from the Navy's Senior Enlisted Acad-



SANDRA JONTZ/Stars and Stripes

Petty Officer 2nd Class Elias Sanchez, 32, is earning a master's degree in human relations from the University of Oklahoma's satellite campus in Naples, Italy. He said his studies have "made me a better sailor," and he praised Navy leaders' efforts to make higher education a priority.

my in Rhode Island. Air Force Senior Master Sgt. David Egernier, spokesman for the academy, said the proposed rule change likely would not affect operations there, since most of their courses are specialized military management lessons.

"Their thrust here is not to get college credits, even though some of our courses count as undergraduate credits," he said. "But it's understood that it helps everyone to have a degree."

Petty Officer 2nd Class Elias

Sanchez, 32, is working on a master's degree in human relations from the University of Oklahoma's satellite campus in Naples, Italy, and called the proposal a "positive challenge" for all sailors.

"It's made me a better sailor," he said. "I feel more confident, and the more and better the education, the better my work will be. The way the world is, it's so complicated, we need more formal studies."

Navy leaders have been supportive in encouraging sailors to pursue higher education when they're assigned to shore duty, Sanchez said. Next, they'll have to tackle making it easy to earn degrees while underway on ship.

Officials from the other services said none requires collegiate degrees for promotion through the enlisted ranks, although all three do consider higher education as a major factor in military advancement.

Cmdr. Ron Hill, spokesman for the Chief of Naval Personnel, said about 2.5 percent of the Navy's enlisted sailors have bachelor's degrees or higher. Naval equipment and support services are becoming more complex, he said, and that's why they're going up with those demands. "It's another way to create healthy competition for promotions," Hill said. "It's about trying to create a slightly more selective force."

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IN THE STATES

Bush 'very pleased' with Pakistan's president

BY JENNIFER LOVEN

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush offered no criticism Saturday of Pakistan's role in the still-unsuccessful hunt for al-Qaida leader Osama bin Laden, even though Pakistan's army is pulling out of one area where the terrorist mastermind has believed to hide.

After an Oval Office meeting with Pakistan's president, Gen. Pervez Musharraf, Bush said, "His army has been incredibly active and very brave... flushing out an enemy that had thought they had found safe haven."

Bush characterized Musharraf as "a determined leader to bring to justice not only people like Osama bin Laden, but to bring to justice those would inflict harm and pain on his own people. ... I am very pleased with his efforts."

Pakistan's army said last month it was withdrawing hundreds of troops from South Waziristan, a tense tribal region near Afghanistan. The decision to pull back came after several mili-

tary operations in recent months.

The United States does not consider the withdrawal a downgrade in the hunt for bin Laden and other terrorist elements, said a senior administration official, who spoke on condition of anonymity. In briefing Bush on Pakistan's military operations in the border areas, Musharraf said the army's focus merely has moved to the North Waziristan region, the official said.

Pakistan officials have said no signs of bin Laden have been found in the southern area. U.S. military forces remain largely on the Afghanistan side of the border.

Bin Laden, the architect of the Sept. 11, 2001, terrorist attacks, has been on the run since U.S. forces toppled Taliban rule in Afghanistan. Four days after those strikes against the United States, Bush declared: "If he thinks he can hide in the southern area of the United States and our allies, he will be sorely mistaken." And two days later, when Bush was asked if he wanted bin Laden dead, the president said, "I want justice. And



President Bush greets Pakistani President Gen. Pervez Musharraf during their meeting in the Oval Office on Saturday in Washington.

there's a old poster out west, that I recall, that said, 'Wanted, Dead or Alive.'"

Musharraf, who visited Bush to congratulate him on winning a second term, got what he most wanted from the session — a strong public commitment from

Bush to take a more active role in the Palestinian-Israeli conflict.

Musharraf has said repeatedly — and did so again by Bush's side — that resolving that dispute is essential to Muslims and to the global fight against terrorism. Settling the Mideast conflict is "the

most important issue ... in the interest of peace in the whole world," Musharraf said.

"I told him this would be a priority of my administration," Bush said.

Afterward, Musharraf said Bush had told him that settling the Middle East conflict "is the core issue, the core of fighting terrorism."

But a second senior administration official said Bush did not go that far.

Among the U.S. officials who participated in the meeting were Vice President Dick Cheney, Defense Secretary Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of State Colin Powell and Powell's replacement at the State Department, national security adviser Condoleezza Rice.

Neither Bush nor Musharraf publicly mentioned Washington's concerns over Musharraf's backtracking on a pledge to relinquish his military post. Bush also did not directly raise the matter with Musharraf privately, the second official said.

The issue has caused some quiet unease that Pakistan was not progressing toward democracy as had been hoped.

Colombian drug kingpin flown to U.S. to face federal charges

BY CATHERINE WILSON

The Associated Press

MIAMI — Colombian drug kingpin Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela was flown to the United States early Saturday about a U.S. government plane, becoming the most powerful Colombian trafficker ever extradited to face U.S. justice.

Rodriguez Orejuela faces trial in federal courts in Miami and New York for plots to smuggle cocaine and launder money.

He arrived before dawn and was sent to a downtown jail, across the street from a courthouse where he was scheduled to make his initial appearance Monday, said a Drug Enforcement Administration official, speaking on condition of anonymity.

Wearing handcuffs and a bulletproof vest, the leader of the once-feared Cali cartel was escorted Friday night to the plane

at a military airfield on the edge of the Colombian capital of Bogotá.

Colombian soldiers and police brandishing rifles guarded a convoy that sped the kingpin from La Picota prison to the airfield.

Top American and Colombian authorities hailed the extradition.

"Every day judicial cooperation between our two countries is becoming more effective and more visible," said Col. Oscar Naranjo, chief of Colombia's Judicial Police.

"This means that the criminals will not find any sanctuary to evade justice."

U.S. Attorney General John Ashcroft said: "Those who violate federal drug laws should never believe that drug trafficking from outside our borders puts them beyond the reach of justice. ... Rodriguez Orejuela will now stand trial for his actions."

Nicknamed "The Chess Play-

er" for his shrewdness, Rodriguez Orejuela and his brother, Miguel, founded and headed the notorious Cali cartel. In the 1990s, the cartel controlled 80 percent of the world's cocaine trade, earning \$8 billion in annual profits, the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration has said.

Michael J. Garcia, an assistant secretary of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, said Rodriguez Orejuela will be "arguably the highest-level drug trafficking figure to ever occupy a U.S. prison cell."

The extradition of Rodriguez Orejuela caps a 13-year investigation by U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement, said Dean Boyd, a spokesman in Washington for the agency.

Colombia's Supreme Court has yet to rule on a U.S. extradition request for Miguel Rodriguez Orejuela.

Associated Press reporter Andrew Selisky contributed to this report from Bogotá, Colombia.



COLOMBIAN NATIONAL POLICE/AP

Police officers escort Colombian drug kingpin Gilberto Rodriguez Orejuela out of La Picota prison in Bogotá, Colombia, on Friday. He was en route to the United States to face charges in federal court.

Thompson worries 'every single night' about U.S. food supply

BY TERENCE HUNT

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — President Bush expressed no alarm Saturday about a warning from his outgoing top health official that the U.S. food supply is vulnerable to terror attacks but would not deny the assessment and assert that the nation's food is safe.

Bush was questioned after an Oval Office meeting with Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf about comments by Health

Secretary is Bush's 8th Cabinet member to resign

and Human Services Secretary Tommy Thompson regarding the vulnerability of the U.S. food supply. Thompson spoke Friday as he announced his coming departure from the Bush administration.

"We're a large country with all kinds of avenues where somebody can inflict harm," Bush said. "We're doing everything we can to protect the American people. There's a lot of work to be done."

Thompson had said he worries "every single night" about a possible terror attack on the food supply, and despite dramatic increases in inspections of food imports, only "a very minute amount" of food is tested at ports and airports.

"For the life of me, I cannot understand why the terrorists have not attacked our food supply because it is so easy to do," Thompson said. "We are importing a lot of

food from the Middle East, and it would be easy to tamper with that."

Thompson was the latest of eight members to quit Bush's 15-member Cabinet as the president moves into his second term.

Besides the eight members whose departures have been announced, Treasury Secretary John Snow has not received a public endorsement of continued service, even though White House officials have described him as a valuable member of the president's economic team.

Bush win in Ohio slimmer due to provisional ballots

BY JOHN SEEWER
The Associated Press

TOLEDO, Ohio — President Bush's victory over Sen. John Kerry in Ohio was closer than the unofficial election night totals showed, but the change is not enough to trigger an automatic recount, according to county-by-county results provided to The Associated Press on Friday.

Bush's margin of victory in the state that put him over the top in his re-election bid will be 119,000 votes — smaller than the unofficial margin of 136,000, the county election board figures showed. That means Kerry drew closer by 17,000 votes.

The margin shrank primarily because of the addition of provisional ballots that were not counted on Election Day and were not included in the unofficial tally. Overseas ballots also were added to the count in all 88 counties.

And a quarter of Kerry's gain was the result of an electronic voting system glitch that gave Bush 3,893 extra votes in a suburban Columbus precinct. The extra votes had been included in the unofficial count, but aren't part of the official tally. Secretary of State Kenneth Blackwell will certify the results Monday.

The president's margin of victory was about 2 percent, not close enough to require an automatic recount. That happens only when the difference is 0.25 percent or less.

Bush beat Kerry nationally by 3 percentage

points. Out of 156,977 provisional ballots checked, 121,598 were pronounced valid and were accepted, meaning about one in five was thrown out, according to an AP tabulation. Provisional voters are cast when poll workers cannot immediately confirm if a voter was properly registered.

How many provisional ballots were cast for Bush and how many were cast for Kerry were not known, because most county election boards did not break down the votes that way. Most boards combined provisional ballots with overseas ballots and those cast on Election Day, then counted the entire batch to reach their final tallies.

The Kerry campaign and two third-party candidates are seeking a recount in Ohio. The Green and Libertarian parties said they have raised enough money to cover the cost. The Kerry campaign said it is not disputing the outcome of the presidential race but wants to make sure any recount is "done accurately and completely."

A Delaware County judge last week sided with elections officials who argued that a recount was a waste of time and money, but a federal judge overturned the decision Friday.

However, U.S. District Judge Edmund Sargus ruled against the third party candidates' request for the recount to begin immediately. A recount probably won't occur until after Ohio's electors meet Dec. 13.

The narrowing of Bush's margin only increases the possibility that the election results could be changed, the Green Party said.



Catherine Carter, front left, a supporter of Democrat Christine Gregoire, rallies for another recount in the governor's race on Tuesday in Bellevue, Wash., against Republican Dino Rossi. Rossi took up the mantle of governor-elect, but an unprecedented third vote count could keep Rossi and Gregoire guessing until almost Christmas or beyond.

Dems to pay for third vote count in Washington state

BY DAVID AMMONS
The Associated Press

OLYMPIA, Wash. — Hoping to void the 42-vote margin held by Republican Dino Rossi, Washington Democrats will pay for a second recount in the state's unsettled governor's race.

The party also asked the state Supreme Court on Friday to rule that all ballots be treated the same from county to county. That would mean considering some previously uncounted ballots, particularly in Democratic-leaning King County, which includes Seattle.

The party's nominee, three-term Attorney General Christine Gregoire, praised the decision to seek a statewide recount.

"We have a thoughtful system for counting every vote in Washington state, and over the next few weeks we will see it work," she said in a written statement. "It may take a few more weeks, but it will be worth it for four years of legitimacy."

Gregoire, 57, best known for

her successful battle with the tobacco industry, trailed Rossi, 45, a former state senator, by just 42 votes after a machine recount was certified earlier this week. Rossi won the initial vote count by 261 ballots, a margin so close it triggered the mandatory machine recount.

Secretary of State Sam Reed is expected to order the new count on Monday and most counties are expected to begin the laborious job Wednesday. Reed said the count should be completed by Dec. 23 unless there are legal challenges.

Rossi said he was outraged at the prospect of a third vote count and a legal battle.

"This really is sad and desperate," he said. "How much do they want to put the voters of Washington through? We were elected and certified twice. I have faith in voters, Christine Gregoire has faith in lawyers."

State Democratic Chairman Paul Berend said the party gave the secretary of state's office a cashier's check for \$30,000 to order a recount of all 1 million.



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San Diego write-in dispute delays mayor's inauguration

BY BEN FOX
The Associated Press

SANTA ANA, Calif. — A swearing-in ceremony for San Diego Mayor Dick Murphy was put on hold Friday until an appeals court can rule on a challenge to an election that was thrown into disarray by a write-in campaign.

The presiding judge of the appeals panel said the court would need several days to rule on whether the San Diego County Registrar of Voters can certify the disputed results of the three-way race.

That means there won't be a decision in time for Monday's scheduled swearing-in ceremony for Murphy. Under San Diego's laws, he will stay on as mayor until the issue is settled, said Deputy City Attorney Jim Chapin.

Murphy finished with a 2,100-vote lead over the write-in candidacy of Councilwoman Donna Frye, a surf shop owner with wide appeal in a city beset by corruption allegations and a pension fund scandal.

Frye's vote total excludes ballots on which voters wrote her name but failed to darken the adjoining oval. The councilwoman estimates that up to 5,000 of her supporters neglected to fill in the bubble.

She has yet to decide whether to challenge a state judge's ruling that allowed the registrar to reject ballots with empty bubbles, said attorney Rory Wicks. Supervisor Ron Roberts came in third in the race, but lawyers for one of his supporters argue that the city charter forbids the type of write-in campaign mounted by Frye.

Data show more in America delaying marriage

BY GENARO C. ARMAS

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — It used to be common for men and women to get a marriage certificate not too long after collecting their high school diploma. Not anymore.

Census Bureau figures for 2003 show one-third of men and nearly one-quarter of women between the ages of 30 and 34 have never been married, nearly four times the rates in 1970.

It's further evidence young people are focusing on education and careers before settling down and beginning families, experts say.

Societal taboos about couples living together before marriage also have eased, said Linda Waite, a University of Chicago sociologist.

Jeni Landers, a 30-year-old law student from Boston, said she considers living together a requirement before saying "I do."

"I don't know how people got married before living together first," said Landers, who moved in with her fiancé after getting engaged nearly a year ago. "This is crucial to see how you get along."

Data from the Census Bureau's Current Population Survey released this week show the age at which someone typically marries for the first time rose

'I do, I do,' but not yet

DELAYING MARRIAGE: One-third of men and nearly one-quarter of women have never been married when they reach 34, nearly four times the rates in 1970, Census Bureau figures show.

POSSIBLE REASONS: People are focusing on education and careers. The easing of taboos about couples living together before marriage and having children outside marriage may also contribute.

STILL MARRYING: Americans still do marry — eventually. In 1970, 8 percent of people 65 and older never had married; now it's 4 percent.

— The Associated Press

from 20.8 for women and 23.2 for men in 1970 to 25.3 and 27.1, respectively, last year.

In 1970, only 6 percent of women 30 to 34 had never been married; the figure was 23 percent in 2003. The rate for never-married men in the same age group rose from 9 percent to 33 percent.

Among younger women, some 36 percent of those 20 to 24 had never been married in 1970, last year it was 75 percent. Among men in that age group, the change was nearly as dramatic: 55 percent in 1970 to 86 percent last year.

"The majority of people still want to get married, but they see it sort of as desert now, something that's desirable rather than necessary," said Dorion Solot, executive director of the Albany, N.Y.-based Alternatives to Marriage Project, which aims to fight discrimination based on marital status and to seek equality and fairness for unmarried people.

"People want to be more sure that they get married, a marriage mistake," Solot said.

Meanwhile, societal pressures to marry before having children have decreased, said Thomas Coleman, executive director for the Glendale, Calif.-based Unmarried America, which also promotes equality for unmarried people. Among the group's concerns are tax policies which it contends are stacked against single people.

In 2003, nearly 35 percent of all births were to unmarried women, according to the National Center for Health Statistics.

Yet births to unmarried teens have declined since the mid-1990s.

Meaghan Lammare, 24, a research assistant in Providence, R.I., said she and her boyfriend of 10 months "are not in a big hurry to marry." Lammare's focus is on work and getting into an Ivy League graduate program, possibly in public policy.

"There's no time frame of when to get married, a lot of people think I could live happily ever after without being married."

"[Compared with 1970], there is a sense that marriage has a less dominant role in our society and is less influential as a social institution," said David Blankenhorn, president of the Institute for American Values.

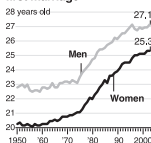
Having parents or family members who are divorced may also make some people in their 20s and 30s hesitant about entering into a long-term relationship, said Dennis Lowe, a Pepperdine University psychology professor who focuses on counseling for engaged and married couples.

National Center for Health Statistics data show the U.S. divorce rate was 2.2 per 1,000 Americans in 1960; it rose steadily to 5.3 per 1,000 in 1981 but has declined slowly since then to 4 per 1,000 in 2001.

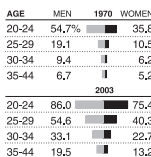
Waiting longer to tie the knot

Americans are waiting longer to get married than they did decades ago, with larger percentages of both men and women in their 20s and 30s who have yet to say "I do."

Estimated median age at first marriage



Percentage of men and women never married



Source: Census Bureau

AP

Cos and effect: Popular entertainer talks tough love



Comedian Bill Cosby had a serious message for more than 2,000 Springfield, Mass., parents Tuesday as he joined with school and community leaders to boost the city's efforts for its poor children: "We are in charge of bringing them up strong regardless of the winds and the flood. ... We're in charge."

BY TRUDY TYNAN

The Associated Press

SPRINGFIELD, Mass. — Bill Cosby was surrounded and upstaged in Springfield's Symphony Hall by two dozen cute first- and second-graders in pigtails and their Sunday best. Deliberately.

"Ladies and gentlemen, this is what we are talking about. These happen to be our redwoods," Cosby said, bending down to the children he had called out of the audience. "We are in charge of bringing them up strong regardless of the winds and the flood. ... We're in charge."

"Are there any junkies in this crowd? Any drug dealers standing here?" he said, pointing to the children on stage while the cheering, clapping audience of 2,000 mostly black parents shouted "No!"

The comedian — who has become known for talking serious and tough about problems faced by blacks, pushing for young people to stay in school and calling for parents "to do more parenting" — was on almost an evangelical roll.

In the six months since making headlines during a commemoration of the 50th anniversary of the U.S. Supreme Court's landmark school-desegregation decision by accusing some blacks of squandering the opportunities it provided, Cosby has taken his message to "town hall" meetings around the county. He's even appeared before Congress.

And he says he's just getting started.

"We've gone around and blamed people. That's not talking," he said. "Some people say I am being too harsh, but we have to turn this around. It's epidemic. We've got to catch these children before they go into the slump. We've got to."

Over the months, the delivery has been honed, become less scolding and more inspirational and inclusive with appeals to whites, Latinos and Asian-Americans.

Still, he bluntly told the minority crowd in Springfield: "You are now getting up. The victim game is over."

"Your children are too important to wait. Stop looking for people to pour money into it," he said. "Do it yourselves."

For the man who knows a bit about mean city streets and dropping out school, the message had a special resonance here.

"I was almost lost, but I was found. Saved, really," said Cosby, who moved his family in the late 1960s to rural Shelburne, about an hour's drive north of Springfield, where he was determined to complete his own education at the University of Massachusetts.

"Education was not number one in my mind," said Cosby, who grew up in the projects of North Philadelphia. His father abandoned the family. His mother worked as a cleaning lady. He dropped out of high school to join

the Navy and, to his mother's dismay, dropped out of Temple University when his career as a stand-up comic took off.

"At the time, in the late 1960s, I had shows on the major networks and four LPs in the Top 10," he said. Still, Cosby admitted, he couldn't get finishing school "out of the back of my mind."

After a performance at the university, a professor approached him and told him that Dwight Allen, then dean of the School of Education, wanted to talk with him. The subject was how television could be used to aid teachers and family life.

"He's genuinely an intellectual — an educator, who happens to be a comic," said Allen, who now teaches at Old Dominion University in Virginia.

Cosby, who got a waiver from Temple to enter the graduate program without a bachelor's degree, got a master's in education in 1972. And he kept going. Five years later, he had his doctorate, also in education.

His dissertation was on the use of comedy to systematically combat racism. The title: "The Integration of Visual Media Via Fat Albert and the Cosby Kids Into the Elementary Schools Culminating as a Teacher Aid to Achieve Increased Learning."

"It's a mark of his character that he decided he was not going to just deal with racial prejudice, but all kinds of prejudice," Allen says. "It's part of his genius that the hero of his comedy, not just black, but fat."

Businesses, charities pitch in to keep cities lit for holidays

BY CONNIE MABIN
The Associated Press

CLEVELAND — Holiday cheer was scarce in the northeast Ohio city of Elyria a few weeks ago when it looked like budget woes would break a Christmas tradition.

Every year for two decades, the city paid for hot chocolate, Christmas lights and Santa Claus at a 1925 mansion that drew 12,000 visitors each holiday season. A \$1 million shortfall earlier this month forced the mayor to cancel Christmas at the mansion and mix plans for other city holiday displays.

But two local charities donated \$35,000 to keep on the lights, an example of how cash-strapped cities across the country are scrounging to pay for holiday decor.

In Farmington, Ark., residents sell ornaments to raise money for the city's Christmas tree display. An Arlington, Texas, a councilwoman led an effort this year to raise nearly \$25,000 within the community to save the city's parade and tree-lighting ceremony.

Pittsburgh — for almost a decade — has paid for its popular downtown "Light Up Night" with the help of business donations, keeping the tradition going even last year when the city was so broke it mayor asked the state to bail it out.

Mary Ellen Solomon, spokeswoman for the Pittsburgh Downtown Partnership that organizes the

monthlong event, said the tradition would be in jeopardy without the support of businesses such as a local utility company and area department store.

"We work very hard to make sure it continues," she said.

Without the extensive animated holiday figures, lit-up skyscrapers and 65-foot tree in the middle of the city, "Christmas just wouldn't be the same."

In Cleveland, where a \$60 million-plus deficit led to layoffs of teachers, police and firefighters, donations by some 40 businesses were crucial to its annual display, said Gary McManus, a spokesman for the nonprofit Downtown Cleveland Partnership. The partnership has organized holiday sponsors for about five years.

The Cleveland Browns football team, General Electric and the visitor's bureau were among those that pitched in this year to help the city pay for the 1 million lights that twinkle in Public Square, where several trees and holiday displays will remain until January.

"Everyone in the region expects that the downtown is going to have the major lighting display in the area," McManus said Tuesday. "But nobody ever stops to think how it happens."

Akron squeezed its Christmas parade and decorations into its tight budget, said spokesman Mark Williamson. But donations from area businesses and volunteers helped expand the celebration without adding costs, he said.

More nation
stories on
Pages 14-15



Christmas decorations light up Fountain Square in downtown Cincinnati last week. Cash-strapped cities around the country are looking for creative ways to pay for holiday decorations.

Study: Walkers suffer for sake of traffic in West, South

BY LESLIE MILLER
The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Cities in the South and West are the most dangerous for pedestrians, with four in Florida earning the dubious distinction of being the deadliest of all.

A private study released Thurs-

day concluded that sprawling, newer cities in the South and West tend to be built with wide, high-speed roads that are especially dangerous for walking.

"So much of our transportation system is designed for cars and only cars," said Anne Canby, president of the Surface Transportation Policy Project, which issued the report. The group advocates balanced transportation.

The report found that the 9,746 walkers who died in 2002-2003 were more likely to be killed on busy streets without crosswalks.

Nearly 40 percent died where

crosswalks weren't available. "Wide roads, speeding traffic and a lack of crosswalks or sidewalks can make walking a deadly activity," the report said. "There simply is not enough pedestrian facilities."

Regional differences in walking safety are stark. Twice as many walkers die in traffic accidents in New Orleans, San Diego and Phoenix than in Minneapolis, Milwaukee and Boston.

People are three times more likely to be struck and killed on streets in Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, Fla., Orlando and Miami-Fort Lauderdale than they are in Cleveland, Cincinnati and Columbus, Ohio.

Tampa-St. Petersburg-Clearwater, characterized by traffic speeding along eight-lane boulevards,

was ranked first for its dangerous roads, with 3.69 deaths per 100,000 people in 2002-2003.

Tampa Mayor Pam Iorio was announcing plans Thursday for improving pedestrian safety on Bay Shore Boulevard, one of the city's main thoroughfares. Iorio was responding to public concern over a young female jogger who was killed in February by a speeding motorcyclist while she tried to cross the busy boulevard.

Tampa can take heart from Salt Lake City, which STPP gave poor marks for protecting its walkers shortly after Rocky Anderson was elected mayor in 2000.

As new mayor, Anderson, who campaigned on making the city more walkable, saw a hit-and-run accident that injured a pedestrian on a downtown street. The victim survived, but Anderson vowed he

would make the city's pedestrians more visible in a city where long blocks and very wide streets make walking dangerous. Salt Lake City put red flags in containers that pedestrians can carry across intersections and wave at drivers. Overhead lights that pedestrians can activate were installed at intersections.

Undercover police ticketed drivers who failed to yield to pedestrians in crosswalks.

Salt Lake City also promotes walking around downtown by making it a better experience. Outdoor dining is now encouraged, ordinances were changed to make signs more interesting, artists and performers are allowed on public sidewalks.

As a result, accidents involving pedestrians fell 36 percent, to 114, in the first 11 months of 2004, from 177 in 2001.

TECHNICS OF THE CRESCENT MOON
MAJGEN MAJGEN COAST MESSIAH

With *Tactics of the Crescent Moon*, U.S. forces could turn the tide in Iraq. From the author of *The Last Hundred Yards*, it contains a detailed description of militant Muslim small-unit maneuvers and how to counter them. MajGen. Ray L. "Ee-Toof" Smith USMC (Ret.) writes the foreword. Send \$14.95 plus \$4.00 s/h to Posterity Press, P.O. Box 5300, Emerald Isle, NC 28594; use your credit card 1-800-505-4334 or posteritypress.org. PX's get thru PMG.

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Great Lakes focus of cleanup effort

BY MAURA KELLY LANNAN
The Associated Press

CHICAGO — Dozens of government and tribal leaders are joining forces to preserve the Great Lakes from environmental dangers, but some say more money and a clear action plan are still needed make sure the job gets done.

Friday's gathering, where participants signed a declaration of support for cleaning up the Great Lakes, was prompted by an executive order issued in May by Presi-

dent Bush. He named a 10-member Cabinet-level task force, chaired by Environmental Protection Agency chief Michael Leavitt, to coordinate cleanup among states, federal agencies and Canada.

"For the first time, we'll demonstrate to the Congress and the nation that the Great Lakes community speaks with one voice. For the first time, we will make the restoration of the Great Lakes a national priority," said Ohio Gov. Bob Taft, co-chairman of the Council of Great Lakes Governors.

Rep. Rahm Emanuel, D-Ill., said he supports the effort if it is backed with a funding commitment from Congress. He said action must be taken soon to reduce environmental threats to the Great Lakes.

The General Accounting Office found last year that 33 federal and 17 state programs have spent more than \$1.7 billion on the environmental restoration of the Great Lakes. The efforts were uncoordinated, however, and the results were difficult to measure, the GAO said.

OPINION

What newspapers are saying at home

The following editorial excerpts are selected from a cross section of newspapers throughout the United States. The editorials are provided by The Associated Press and other statewide syndicates.

More awareness needed Chicago Tribune

Of all the questions that patients ask their doctors, there's one that often is overlooked: How much sleep have you had? That's a question every patient, particularly those awaiting surgery or other invasive procedures, should be asking after the dramatic results of two new studies in the New England Journal of Medicine. The studies examined the performance of sleep-deprived interns — first-year doctors-in-training who provide much direct medical care in teaching hospitals. They found that the longer the interns went without sleep, the more errors they made.

Medical mistakes kill. A 1999 Institute of Medicine report suggested medical errors led to the deaths of an estimated 44,000 to 98,000 hospitalized U.S. patients every year. That study didn't delve into the issue of sleep deprivation and medical errors. These new studies help fill in some blanks, even though they focused only on the newest doctors. It would be valuable to study the effects of sleep deprivation on doctors who are well past their residency years, or even past their first year of residency. There are many reasons for medical mistakes, not getting enough sleep shouldn't be one of them.

Ohio: Love it or leave it alone The Ironton (Ohio) Tribune

OK. Here we are nearly a month after the U.S. presidential race was over and we're still fighting battles in Ohio — mostly caused by voters who feel their minds aren't ready to "fix" all of our problems. In the weeks since Ohio captured the national attention as being the ultimate "swing" state in the 2004 election, the blows to our state's credibility just keep coming.

Sen. John Kerry conceded President Bush's victory. He gave up the fight when he realized the numbers were likely to fall his way. His concession didn't come with a disclaimer: I concede unless someone in a week or two can prove to me that in fact I did not win. Not even Kerry is that much of a flip-flopper.

If the election count was good enough to satisfy Kerry, then it's good enough for us. All you, outside instigators, please go home and come back to Ohio when you're more interested in counting historical sites or football scores instead of alleged voting errors that seem insignificant to us.

Canada's support not in doubt The Florida Times Union, Jacksonville

Way too much hand-wringing is occurring over [last week's] visit to Canada by President Bush.

After a member of the Canadian Liberal Party was seen on a Canadian comedy show grinding her boot heel into the face of a Bush doll, the worrywarts started in about how divided Canada and the United States have become. It has become another "values" debate.

The bottom line is that Canada has been a friend to the United States through thick and thin, through two world wars and even today when on terror, sending troops at least as far as Afghanistan before balking at Iraq.

For many reasons, from abortion policies to the war in Iraq, Bush may not be a favorite in the general population north of the 49th parallel, but let's be clear on this: Canadians want the same things Americans want, which is a prosperous, independent country free to determine its own policies and politics.

The way to keep their friendship is to



honor Canadian sovereignty, just as we demand that ours is honored, and to avoid hand-wringing and histrionics when Canadians (respectfully) voice their disagreements.

The right kind of CIA changes Rochester (N.Y.) Democrat and Chronicle

New CIA director Porter Goss is doing as he should: He's shaking to its roots an organization whose prestige has plummeted, whose failures in part opened a path for the 9/11 terrorists.

Goss understands, an uncommon thing in Washington's bureaucratic jungle, that it isn't enough for a new CIA boss or Cabinet secretary to bring in a new management team and leave the rest of the sea of middle managers alone. That ensures only superficial change. If improvement truly is the goal, then a boss committed to that end should reach into every corner of the enterprise.

Goss' shakeup has unnerved the entire CIA community. No. 2 man John McLaughlin is out. The agency's deputy director for operations is stepping down, as is his deputy. Further down the ladder, the heads of the European and Far East divisions reportedly are on the way out.

Goss' die-deep methods seem defensible from a management standpoint. But his motives must be similarly sound.

If he's uprooting the ranks simply to get rid of those deemed insufficiently loyal to President Bush, then he's toying with the underlying integrity of the agency. ... Goss says he's engineering needed change in an agency whose performance has been substandard. It's about better intelligence, not loyalty.

Vets need healthy increase The Walla Walla (Wash.) Union-Bulletin

No matter how you look at the news about the budget for veterans' health care in 2005, you can't be encouraged about our nation's commitment to taking care of those who have protected us.

While it is true that the budget calls for a record \$30.3 billion, an increase of \$1.9 billion from this year, it falls considerably short of the \$3.1 billion increase the House Veterans Affairs Committee said in Febru-

ary was needed just to maintain the current level of benefits and services.

The number of veterans needing health care services is increasing as veterans from World War II, Korea, Vietnam and the first Gulf War grow older, and more veterans are being injured daily in Afghanistan and Iraq. Does the government really expect veterans to forego treatment because it didn't budget enough?

Congress' lack of courage to fund veterans' health care at the necessary levels cannot be allowed to hurt those who have stood in harm's way for the rest of us.

NBA brawl out of bounds Journal Star, Peoria, Ill.

If there is one inviolable rule in sports, it's that players can't attack the people buying the tickets up in the stands. That's why National Basketball Association Commissioner David Stern's suspensions of several players involved in one of the worst brawls in professional sports history are warranted. Criminal charges may yet be, though that's not as clear-cut. The fight erupted near the end of a game last night between the Indiana Pacers and the Detroit Pistons, [after] Pacers player Ron Artest committed a hard foul against Pistons player Ben Wallace and Wallace shoved him violently in response.

Fights have long been a part of the heat of competition. But if athletes declared war on each other in the past — and we don't condone that, either — doing so on fans is a relatively new phenomenon. The same can be said about fans who attack players.

There must be boundaries, in sports and life, if we are to keep living, playing and watching together. ...

There are quite a few things more important than winning or losing on the athletic field, and more of this nation's leaders need to stand up and say so, while modeling the kind of conduct to which all of us should aspire.

'Presenteism' is the U.S. way Chicago Tribune

Playing in pain or sickness is the American way. Who didn't admire the World Series performance of Red Sox ace Curt Schilling, who pitched with a dislocated tendon behind his right ankle? ... Or remember the magnificent performance of a virus-weakened Michael Jordan against the Utah Jazz in Game 5 of the 1997 NBA finals? ...

So how can it be that Americans are now being counseled to stay home from work if they're sick? Yes, it's hard to believe. But lamentably, a recent Tribune article delivered the bad news: Studies suggest that productivity losses from working while sick — a phenomenon known as "presenteeism" — far outstrip the costs of absenteeism. In other words, the experts suggest that we stay home when we're sick so we don't spread the illness and torpedo company productivity.

But, voices splutter across the country, that's not the American way. That sounds more like a cushy European job, with its six guaranteed weeks of paid vacation and probably more than generous sick-leave plans. ... Anyone can come to work healthy. The real loyalists are those who refuse to take a sick day. Those "experts" who suggest otherwise need to wise up.

Rather's on-air legacy mixed The Herald, Rock Hill, S.C.

Many will say CBS anchorman Dan Rather decided to call it quits because of fallout from the story about George W. Bush's stint in the National Guard. But his real nemesis may have been irrelevance.

The day when the nation could look to three anchors on three networks for their dose of evening news are long gone. And in an environment where the influence of the remaining network anchors is dwindling, Rather has fallen to a distant third place in the ratings race. ...

Rather will be remembered not only for the botched National Guard story but also for some other odd incidents in his long career. For example, there was his reply at a press conference to a query from President Nixon about whether he was running for something: "No, sir, Mr. President," said Rather, "are you?"

He also vacated his anchor chair during a live broadcast to protest delaying the news for a tennis match, leaving dead air for almost six minutes. ...

And, of course, there was Rather, himself, rattling off the homespun homilies and aphorisms that sometimes were hard to decipher and, at other times, simply goofy.

But Rather also should be remembered for being the hard news reporter he claimed to be, as someone who got the story right a lot more times than he got it wrong, and as a reporter who, throughout his career, was willing to travel to dangerous spots to get the news.

'Greatest Show on Earth' inspires tiny replica

BY VICKIE CHACHERE

The Associated Press

SARASOTA, Fla. — The "Greatest Show on Earth" in Howard Tibbals' world is also the smallest, with its diminutive circus acts, tiny spectators and a "big" top that measures just about 4 feet tall.

It is a magical world more than 50 years in the making, its seeds planted in Tibbals' imagination as a child when he watched the circus roll into town.

He has since handcrafted nearly 1 million pieces to make up his miniature circus, which will soon have a permanent home at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in a grand \$9 million building.

The Tibbals Learning Center — built with a \$6.5 million donation from Tibbals, the retired head of a successful flooring company — is scheduled to be completed in January 2006.

When it's done, the display also will be another milestone in the renaissance of the Ringling estate. Museum officials said the tiny circus is central to the effort to create a collection of artifacts that will be a tribute to the American circus.

Visitors will be able to see Tibbals' 1/16th-scale miniature circus fully assembled in an area that's large enough to park 11 school buses. Dubbed the "Howard Brothers Circus," it will depict a circus coming to town on

rail cars, complete with its side-shows, a parade of exotic animals and a big top with 7,000 intricately carved folding chairs.

Tibbals, 68, began the painstaking installation in November.

"It's going to take me an entire year to do what they did with 1,200 employees in just hours," he said during a recent interview in the new 30,000-square-foot center. "How in the world did they move that stuff every day? An awful lot of muscle, both human and animal."

The creation of Tibbals' circus is both a tale of a man fascinated and charmed by circuses and remarkable devotion to recreating

a bygone era. Since he was a young man, Tibbals has spent two or three hours a day working with wood, plastic and cloth to construct the tiny elements that make up the traveling big top.

The circus has been on display a few times before, including at the World's Fair in Knoxville, Tenn., in 1982 and at the National Geographic Society in Washington. But for most of its existence, it has been in storage at Tibbals' home in Oviedo, Tenn.

Tibbals had been searching for a permanent home for his circus when he made the \$6.5 million donation in 2000 for the construction of the facility. Additional financing is coming from the Ringling endowment and the state.

The center will also become home to the massive collection of



Howard Tibbals displays part of his miniature replica circus train rail cars at the John and Mable Ringling Museum of Art in Sarasota, Fla. Tibbals has spent decades building the tiny circus, which has diminutive circus acts, little trains, tiny spectators and a "big" top that measures 4 feet tall.

circus documents, photographs and posters Tibbals amassed in his effort to accurately recreate every detail of the circuses of the early 20th century.

The display is designed to replicate the shows that toured from 1919 to 1938, although Tibbals said he did depart to include exact replicas of some costumes from the 1952 film, "The Greatest Show on Earth."

"It's the story of American culture," said John Wetenhall, executive director of the Ringling Museum. "It was your television, your radio, your opera, your zoo. And all of it came to your town."

Wetenhall said the opening of the Tibbals center will be another important step in the rebirth of the once-ailing museum complex.

The museum is now opened under the auspices of Florida State University, which took over the Ringling mansion, the art museum and the circus museum four years ago.

The Tibbals center will be one of the new highlights of \$76 million in restoration work and new construction that will remake the Ringling complex by 2007. Other highlights include creating a new home for the 18th Century Ven-

tian Asolo Theater, new art galleries and the 2002 renovation of Ringling's winter mansion, Ca d'Zan.

Wetenhall said the Ringling museum in the past had not fully developed its circus museum to reflect the important historical and cultural role the shows played.

The 66-acre estate on Sarasota Bay that became Ringling's winter home in 1926 is the appropriate place to do that, he said. John Ringling was one of five brothers who created what became the world's most famous circus in the 1880s.

Bambino's bat sells for \$1.26 million

BY LARRY MC SHANE

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Going, going, gone. The massive 46-ounce Louisville Slugger used by Babe Ruth to drill the first home run in Yankee Stadium history was sold for \$1.26 million Thursday to an unidentified private collector.

The bat, 36 inches of solid ash billed as "The Holy Grail of sports memorabilia," sold after about one minute of high-stakes bidding at Sotheby's auction house, fetching a Ruthian price above its presale estimate of \$1 million, said Sotheby's spokeswoman Lauren Gioia.

The bat was only the third piece of sports memorabilia to break the \$1 million mark at auction, joining Mark McGwire's 70th home run ball (\$3 million) and a 1909 Honus Wagner baseball card (\$1.265 million), the auction house said. It was the most ever paid for a baseball bat.

The winning bid — about half the \$2.5 million it originally cost to build Yankee Stadium — came from Doug Allen, president of the Chicago-based auction house MaestroNet Inc., on behalf of an East Coast collector who preferred to remain anonymous. The hammer price was \$1.1 million, with a 15 percent commission added.

"It was a blur," Allen said after the gavel fell on a final sales price of \$1,265,000. "It was exciting sitting in the room, lots of adrenaline pumping."

Ruth lugged the historic lumber with him to the plate on April 18, 1923, the first game inside "The House That Ruth Built." With 74,000 fans looking on, Ruth christened the new ballpark with a third-inning blast into the right field bleachers as his New York Yankees beat the Boston Red Sox, 4-1.

The bat didn't get out much after Ruth's blast. The Bambino donated it to the Los Angeles Evening Herald as the top prize in a high school home run hitting contest.

The barrel still bears

Ruth's inscription: "To the Boy Home Run King of Los Angeles, 'Babe' Ruth, N.Y. May 7, 1923." One month later, high school slugger Victor Orsatti was presented with the bat. He kept it

until his death 61 years later.

The bat was willed to Orsatti's caretaker, who stored it under her bed until putting it up for auction. A portion of the proceeds will go toward a youth baseball program at a Mexican orphanage, the auction house said.

The auction also included several items connected to the Brooklyn Dodgers, which moved to Los Angeles in 1957. The Los Angeles Dodgers, owned since February by Boston real estate developer Frank McCourt, bought the items as part of a plan to mark the 50th anniversary of the Dodgers' 1955 triumph over their bitter Bronx rivals, the Yankees — their only title while in New York City.



SOOTHEY'S AP
A Louisville Slugger used by Babe Ruth sold for \$1.26 million at a Thursday auction at Sotheby's in New York. Ruth used the bat to hit the first home run in Yankee Stadium three innings into the first game in 1923.

Left: Ruth takes a practice swing before the 1923 home opener.

America picks favorites for People's Choice

The Associated Press

LOS ANGELES — The People's Choice Awards have added new categories to the upcoming ceremony, including favorite movies, favorite smile and favorite cartoon star.

There were 14 new categories, including favorite overall movie, favorite movie drama, comedy and sequel.

Additional new awards include favorite hair (Courtney Cox Arquette, Penelope Cruz, Jennifer Garner, Kate Hudson and Charlize Theron), and favorite "look" (Brandy, Cameron Diaz, Hudson, Scarlett Johansson and Natalie Portman.)

Previous nominees for the 31st annual People's Choice Awards were announced in October, with Nicole Kidman, Julianne Moore,

Julia Roberts, Charlize Theron, Reese Witherspoon up for favorite actress and George Clooney, Tom Cruise, Johnny Depp, Tom Hanks, Denzel Washington for favorite male actor.

The nomination and awards process, formerly based on a national poll, has been revised to be compiled by Entertainment Weekly, the People's Choice production team and pop culture fans.

The public can choose the winners online at www.pcavote.com. Voting closes Dec. 13.

CBS will broadcast the ceremony in the States on Sunday, Jan. 9.

Other new nominees:

■ Favorite movie: "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," "Fahrenheit 9/11," "The Incredibles," "Shrek 2" and "Spider-Man 2."

■ Favorite comedy: "13 Going on 30," "Anchorman," "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason," "Mean Girls," "Shrek 2."

■ Favorite sequel: "Bridget Jones: The Edge of Reason," "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," "Kill Bill: Vol. 2," "Shrek 2" and "Spider-Man 2."

■ Favorite film villain: Bill in "Kill Bill: Vol. 2," played by David Caradine, Doc Ock in "Spider-Man 2," played by Alfred Molina, Elle Driver in "Kill Bill: Vol. 2," played by Daryl Hannah; The Fairy Godmother, "Shrek 2," voiced by Jennifer Saunders; Sirius Black in "Harry Potter and the Prisoner of Azkaban," played by Gary Oldman.

■ Favorite animated movie: "The Incredibles," "The Polar Express," "Shrek 2," "SpongeBob Squarepants: The Movie" and "Team America: World Police."

■ Favorite cartoon star: Donkey in "Shrek 2," Elastigirl in "The Incredibles," Frazzle in "The Incredibles," Puss in Boots in "Shrek 2" and Shrek in "Shrek 2."

■ Favorite on-screen chemistry: Drew Barrymore and Adam Sandler in "50 First Dates," Kate Winslet and Jim Carrey in "Eternal Sunshine of the Spotless Mind," Kate Winslet and Johnny Depp in "Finding Neverland," Kirsten Dunst and Tobey Maguire in "Spider-Man 2" and Ben Stiller and Owen Wilson in "Starsky and Hutch."

■ Favorite country group: Alison Krauss & Union Station, Brooks & Dunn, Lonestar, Rascal Flatts and SheDaisy.

■ Favorite country male singer: Jimmy Buffett, Alan Jackson, Toby Keith, Tim McGraw and Willie Nelson.

■ Favorite country female singer: Loretta Lynn, Martina McBride, Reba McEntire, LeAnn Rimes and Shania Twain.

■ Favorite smile: Rosario Dawson, Jennifer Lopez, Sarah Jessica Parker, Julia Roberts, Aisha Tyler.

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Jamie Foxx, as Ray Charles



Ray Charles



Daryl Hannah



River of butter

MN NEW ULM — Too many firefighters had a pile of popcorn handy — or better yet, loads of lobster tails.

An intense fire consumed half of the roof of the Associated Milk Producers Inc. butter packaging plant, sending melted butter flowing out of the facility.

There were no immediate reports of injuries, but officials worried that the melted butter would interfere with the railroad tracks bordering the plant's east end.

The plant was holding an estimated 3 million pounds of butter at the time of the fire Wednesday.

Doughnut-jacking

PA HARRISBURG — Police followed a trail of doughnuts to find a stolen Krispy Kreme delivery truck.

"It has a happy ending," Swatara Township Sgt. Robert Simmonds said. "The evidence was brought back to the police station, and the cops are eating the doughnuts."

It was 12:45 a.m. Thursday when Krispy Kreme delivery man Tim Trostle stopped at a Swatara Township convenience store and left the engine running as he made the delivery. Someone fled with the truck, but since Trostle had left the back doors open, police were able to follow a trail of doughnuts.

The doughnut trail ended before long, but police in a nearby township found a doughnut cart near the Harrisburg city line. City police found the truck near a downtown bar.

No arrests were immediately made. The truck was returned to the company.

Although Simmonds had been joking about police taking the contents of the truck, he acknowledged seeing Krispy Kreme doughnuts at a station conference room Thursday.

Penny payoff

UT SALT LAKE CITY — Grant Petersen tried to give officials his two cents — in the form of 8,200 cents.

Petersen volunteered \$82 worth of pennies from his bank and delivered them in a bucket to pay an \$82 fine he got for driving with a burnt-out headlight.

Court officials are apparently unamused, and have asked Petersen to offer a more "acceptable" form of payment. They say state policy allows clerks to reject unusual forms of payment, and it's going to waste county resources for someone to count all that change.

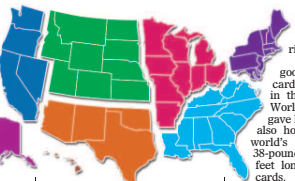
Stroke of luck

FL MIAMI — A nurse's aide who quit her job to take a cruise hit the jackpot.

Carol Baird won a \$321,694 slot machine jackpot aboard a Carnival Cruise Lines ship off the U.S. Virgin Islands early Wednesday.

Baird, 59, quit her job after realizing she had booked her cruise in violation of her company's policy prohibiting personal vacation time seven days before or after a holiday.

Baird said she was playing the ship's MegaCash machine, featuring a fleet-wide progressive jackpot, with her husband gaming next to her. Initially she didn't realize she had struck the bonanza.



AMERICAN ROUNDUP

Faulty Christmas tree

IL CHICAGO — Gov. Rod Blagojevich turned on the humer after the lights on the city's giant holiday tree failed to turn on.

Blagojevich made light of the situation Wednesday, explaining to about 100 people gathered why nothing happened after a 10-second countdown and the flip of a switch by Blagojevich, his wife Patti and their daughter Annie.

"These are difficult budget times. We're cutting everywhere, including Christmas lights," Blagojevich joked.

The lights came on after a couple of minutes, and after the ceremony, Blagojevich jokingly assumed it was a state worker's fault.

Credit-card collector

CA PISMO BEACH — He's a plastic millionaire.

Walter Cavanaugh — also known as "Mr. Plastic Fantastic" — has a wallet nearly as long as a football field to carry his credit cards.

Cavanaugh owns 1,497 valid credit cards (he assumes a card is valid until he hears otherwise) with a potential credit line of about \$1.7 million.

The retired real estate broker, who lives in the small San Luis Obispo County community of Shell Beach, said his collecting began with a bet more than three decades ago. He and a friend were sitting in his apartment in 1969 and bet who could collect the most credit cards. The loser would buy dinner.



Feeling the music

Jamie Breiwick, of Racine, Ill., plays trumpet in the Jamie Breiwick quintet as the group performs at the Jazz Estate in Milwaukee.

Cavanaugh managed to obtain 143 cards in a year and got a rib-eye steak dinner.

He has become so good at collecting the cards that he has a place in the Guinness Book of World Records, which gave him his nickname. He also holds the title for the world's longest wallet — a 38-pound monster that is 250 feet long and can hold 800 cards.

Defensive passenger

ND FARGO — A woman who objected to being frisked may be charged with assault for slapping an airport security guard's face with her boarding pass, police said.

The 48-year-old woman swatted the agent after being told she had to be patted down for repeatedly setting off metal detectors before her flight Wednesday, Lt. Tod Dahle said.

The woman was allowed to leave on another flight, but police plan to pursue a misdemeanor assault charge, Dahle said.

Prayer apology

GA ATHENS — A high school principal apologized Monday for reading a poem called "The New School Prayer" over the school's intercom, which brought complaints from some parents who said it violated the principle of separation of church and state.

Tony Craft said he wasn't not to promote religion but to provoke thought and discussion among students about the changing political climate in school when he read the poem the Tuesday before Thanksgiving break.

The poem, which has circulated on the Internet since at least 1992, is written in the rhyming style of the children's prayer that begins "Now I lay me down to sleep." It refers to prayer not being allowed in school, although students can "dress like freaks, and pierce our noses, tongues and cheeks."

Cigarette lawsuit

CA SACRAMENTO — The state settled its suit with Safeway Inc. over allegations the supermarket giant sold cigarettes to minors and failed to take adequate steps to prevent further sales at its stores.

The settlement requires Safeway to pay \$245,000 in penalties and legal costs, and to do a better job of preventing sales to minors at its 538 California Safeway Vons, Pavilions and Pak N' Save stores, said Attorney General Bill Lockyer.

NYPD settlement

NY NEW YORK — The city has been ordered in federal court to give about \$275,000 in back pay to a police officer and two firefighters who were fired for riding in blackface on a Labor Day parade float in 1998.

Judge John Sprizzo ruled the city must pay Officer Joseph Loucuro \$80,000, firefighter Robert Steiner \$77,121, and firefighter Jonathan Walters \$117,804, court records showed.

Former Mayor Rudolph Giuliani blasted the display as a "disgusting display of racism" and publicly declared the three men would be fired.

But last year, Sprizzo ruled that their First Amendment rights were violated when they were fired.



Don't mess with these pooches

English bulldog pups Moby and Dudley are taken for a training walk by their owner, Janie Talaloti, in Kalispell, Mont. Despite their intimidating appearance, the animals are known to be gentle.



Are you real?

Esmel Vargas, 1, twerks the nose of a person dressed as Santa Claus at the Holiday on the Brazos celebration in the Freeport (Texas) Municipal Park.



Batter up!

Isaac Buechel, 4, of Burlington hits snowballs with a bat while playing with his grandfather in West Burlington, Iowa.



Artistic imaginations Artists Eva and Adele, a living art exhibit, pose for a photograph during Art Basel preview for art collectors at the Miami Beach Convention Center in Miami Beach, Fla. Adele said the purpose of their matching outfits, makeup and hair styles was to blur traditional gender boundaries.



Enjoying the snow June and Len Horwitz, from Kansas City, Mo., stroll along the Country Club Plaza through the heavy snowflakes that fell.



Christmas dance Ice Dancers perform to "Sleigh Ride" at the Arkansas Best Corporation Performing Arts Center at the Fort Smith (Ark.) Convention Center.



Nuns on ice Sisters of the Norwood, Ohio and Minnesota convents of the Daughters of Mary, Mother of Our Savior congregation try to ice skate at the Northern Kentucky Ice Center in Crescent Springs, Ky.

15-year-old case arrest

AZ PHOENIX — Fifteen years after three infants died in her care, a baby sitter faces murder charges.

Amy Lynn Scott, 36, is awaiting extradition to Arizona from Georgia after a detective re-examined the evidence in the separate deaths in the Phoenix area over nine months in 1989.

Scott had gone to church with the parents of all three infants and lived in the same neighborhood.

The deaths of Zachary Mann, Shauna Cunningham and Jordan Whitmer were considered suspicious at the time but were ruled natural or unexplained because investigators didn't have a solid case against Scott.

Investigators haven't found a motive for the killings, and Scott denies any wrongdoing. She was taken to a Georgia jail and had waived extradition, but it was unclear when she would arrive in Phoenix.

Dog dies from bee stings

CA LAKEWOOD — A 4-year-old cocker spaniel died a day after coming under attack by a swarm of bees nesting in discarded backyard tires, authorities said.

Pinto was treated by a veterinarian after the attack and released but died at his home in this suburb 25 miles southeast of downtown Los Angeles, apparently from the bee stings, said Capt. Aaron Reyes of the Southeast Area Animal Control Authority.

Pinto's owner was cutting brush in the yard when she disturbed the bee colony, according to Capt. Rick Tiberio of the Los Angeles County Fire Department.

A bee expert who went to the scene estimated there were about 20,000 bees.

The dog tried to hide under a woodpile and bags of recycled cans.

Marijuana bale found

ME AUBURN — Drug agents are investigating how a 20-pound bale of marijuana got mixed in with a truckload of watermelons that were delivered to the Good Shepherd Food Bank.

The watermelons came across the marijuana while picking through the watermelons.

After the bale was discovered, the Maine Drug Enforcement Agency was called. An agent quizzed the man who found the bale but quickly determined he had nothing to do with the illegal shipment.

More likely, a drug trafficker thousands of miles away in Mexico loaded the pot and either forgot about it or was forced to abandon the shipment, they said. The source of the pot isn't expected to be located.

Infant abuse rates high

AK ANCHORAGE — A state report says infants are physically abused in Alaska at disproportionately high rates.

Division of Public Health officials said studies from Pennsylvania, Colorado and Scotland found much lower rates than in Alaska.

According to the report presented at the Alaska Health Summit, 14 infants died from abuse during

the study period of 1994 through 2000.

Fraternity alcohol ban

OK NORMAN — Drinking will be banned at University of Oklahoma fraternities and residence halls under new policies announced, two months after a 19-year-old student died of alcohol poisoning.

University of Oklahoma President David Boren said the rules will go into effect Jan. 15 at the start of the new semester. Three violations will end in a student's suspension for one semester.

The university also will set up a hot line for students to report violations, and will expand alcohol education programs.

Drinking is already prohibited at sororities.

Boren will present the policies to the Board of Regents for approval. Regents have been involved in creating the plan and support it.

Fatal hunting accident

VA STUARTS DRAFT — A Stuart's Draft man died and his uncle was arrested after what authorities described as an apparent hunting accident on family land.

Chad Mays, 29, died at the scene after he was shot in the chest by a high-powered rifle.

George F. Lowery, 50, of Stuart's Draft, was charged with reckless handling of a firearm and could face more charges, according to the Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries, which handles all hunting accidents.

The shooting occurred while Mays and Lowery were hunting deer together on private land next to the George Washington National Forest.

Game Warden Capt. Mike Clark said the victim apparently was mistaken for a deer.

Ship runs aground

WI MARINETTE — A Greek-flagged freighter with a cargo of pig iron from Brazil ran aground in Lake Michigan's Green Bay, Coast Guard officials said.

The accident occurred about a half-mile east-northeast of the Menominee River in about 21 feet of water near the Michigan-Wisconsin border, Coast Guard Commander Mark Hamilton said.

No one was injured and there was no reported pollution. The vessel was not blocking the channel.

Hamilton said that officials were investigating whether there was damage to the Chios Pride, which was flying a Greek flag, and if it could be refloated.

Coast Guard officials were investigating whether a mechanical problem or human error caused the ship to run aground.

Alcohol ban

ID MOSCOW — Alcohol will be forbidden at the University of Idaho's Delta Sigma Phi Fraternity through the end of 2005, school officials said. The move follows the alcohol-related deaths of two members earlier this year. Jason Yearout, 20, died when the motorcycle he was driving hit a wall on fraternity property.

Passenger Jack Shannon, 19, was also killed.

Stories and photos from wire services



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IN THE WORLD

EU supports Annan in face of U.S. criticism

BY EDITH M. LEDERER

The Associated Press

UNITED NATIONS — The European Union threw its political weight behind beleaguered U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan on Friday but the United States again refused to back him and a U.S. senator reiterated his call for the U.N. chief to resign.

Outside the United States, there is no clamor for Annan's resignation, and the secretary-general has been picking up support from many of the 191 U.N. member states. He has the important backing of the four veto-wielding members on the U.N. Security Council — Russia, China, Britain and France.

In a show of support from the powerful European Union, the ambassador of the Netherlands, which currently holds the EU

presidency, went to Annan's 38th floor office at U.N. headquarters Friday morning to express support to the secretary-general on behalf of the 25-nation bloc.

Earlier, U.S. Ambassador John Danforth, whose resignation as envoy to the United Nations was confirmed late Thursday, met with the secretary-general. Danforth said Annan's future wasn't discussed, but he refused several times to back him — virtually the same same taken Thursday by President Bush.

Danforth was asked whether the United States had confidence in Annan in view of Washington's calls for a thorough, comprehensive and objective investigation of the allegations of corruption in the U.N. oil-for-food program in Iraq.

It's important that those interested in the success of the investigation "go into this with an open mind — and that means nei-

ther prejudging it on the side of innocence or the side of guilt," said Danforth. The envoy will return to his home in St. Louis when Bush's first term ends in January.

Several U.S. newspapers have called for Annan to be replaced because of the oil-for-food allegations, but Sen. Norm Coleman's demand for the secretary-general to resign made headlines earlier this week.

The Minnesota Republican reiterated in a CNN interview on Friday that the U.N. chief executive presided over the "greatest fraud and theft" in the history of the United Nations.



Annan

"You need credibility and you can't have that if the guy who is in charge is still in charge," said Coleman, who is leading one of five U.S. Congressional investigations into the oil-for-food accusations.

The program began in 1996 to help Iraqis cope with U.N. sanctions imposed after Saddam Hussein's 1990 invasion of Kuwait.

It allowed Saddam's government to sell unlimited quantities of oil provided most of the proceeds went to buy food, medicine and humanitarian goods and to compensate victims of the 1991 Gulf War.

Two weeks ago, the Senate Permanent Subcommittee on Investigations, which Coleman chairs said it had uncovered evidence that Saddam's government raised more than \$21.3 billion in illegal revenue by subverting U.N. sanctions and the oil-for-food program.

Belgrade demands annulment of Kosovo election

BY JOVANA GEC

The Associated Press

BELGRADE, Serbia-Montenegro — Serbia demanded Saturday that the U.N. administrator of Kosovo annul the election of the province's new prime minister, a former rebel leader whom the Serbs have accused of committing war crimes.

At a top-level meeting, Belgrade officials said that Kosovo parliament's election of ethnic Albanian Ramush Haradinaj was unacceptable and that it brought into question planned talks on the province's future as well as regional stability.

"A man who carries a heavy burden of crimes committed in



Haradinaj

both war and peace was elected the head of (Kosovo) government," Serbian Prime Minister Vojislav Kostunica said.

"That could have had decisive influence on the situation in Kosovo and the whole region."

Kostunica said the Belgrade demand for removal of Haradinaj will be presented in letters to Kosovo U.N. administrator Soren Jessen-Petersen, the U.N. Security

Council, the European Union and other relevant world institutions.

The Serbian government is demanding that he (Jessen-Petersen) uses his authority to overturn that provocative act," Kostunica said.

Haradinaj was elected to the post of the prime minister on Friday by Kosovo's newly elected assembly. The United Nations and other Western officials hailed his election as democratic despite the war crimes investigation against him.

Haradinaj's small party, Alliance for the Future of Kosovo, came in third in Oct. 23 national elections. It struck a coalition deal with the party with the most

votes, the Democratic League of Kosovo led by Ibrahim Rugova, who becomes president.

The Serb authorities accuse Haradinaj of committing war crimes against Serb civilians in western Kosovo, where he led rebel troops of the separatist ethnic Albanian Kosovo Liberation Army during a 1998-99 war.

Belgrade has repeatedly insisted that Haradinaj be indicted for war crimes by the U.N. tribunal in The Hague, Netherlands. Serb authorities reportedly have provided evidence to the U.N. prosecutors for such an indictment.

The Hague tribunal investigators recently questioned Haradinaj, but no charges have been brought against him.

The Serbian leaders said in a joint statement that he faces a Belgrade arrest warrant and 108 charges filed against him here because of the alleged war crimes committed by his troops against Serb civilians, as well as other offenses.

"What is the message that is being sent by his election?" the Serbian officials asked. "It cannot be justified by phrases about democracy or formal procedures."

Kosovo officially remains part of Serbia-Montenegro, but Belgrade has had no authority over the province since 1999, when NATO bombing forced Serbia to pull out and relinquish control to the United Nations and NATO.

Ukraine's parliament fails to pass fraud protections for Dec. 26 runoff

BY ALEKSANDAR VASOVIC

The Associated Press

KIEV, Ukraine — Opposition leader Viktor Yushchenko suffered a setback in parliament Saturday when his foes blocked electoral amendments intended to avert fraud in a new presidential runoff later this month.

Booyed by Friday's Supreme Court ruling to throw out the original Nov. 21 runoff as fraudulent, Yushchenko had pushed for quick passage of the legal changes, saying they were essential to a fair ballot in his Dec. 26 rematch with Prime Minister Viktor Yanukovich.

But the parliament, the Verkhovna Rada, instead agreed for 10 days without passing the opposition-drafted bills, which would have amended election laws and reshuffled the central election commission.

Communists, socialists and pro-government factions in Rada had promised to back those electoral changes in exchange for opposition support for constitutional changes that would transfer some of the president's powers to the parliament.

Yushchenko's supporters, who are resisting weakening the presidency, suggested that the parliament vote on the electoral amendments now and consider the constitutional reform only after the presidential rerun.

Opponents, however, cried foul, blocking the en-

tire legislation before voting to adjourn until Dec. 14 — 12 days before the new runoff.

Socialist leader Oleksandr Moroz, who supported Yushchenko in the runoff in exchange for backing the constitutional amendments, accused Yushchenko of renegeing on his promise.

"No one is going to win by renegeing on the agreement," Moroz said.

The court ruling invalidated official results that showed Yanukovich won the Nov. 21 runoff, which the opposition claimed was rigged. Western governments also refused to recognize the results.

Also Saturday, the Central Election Commission formally set the date for the runoff for Dec. 26.

Yanukovich's camp, meanwhile, said the prime minister had decided to participate in the runoff, as widely expected.

"There's no other way but to participate and win," spokeswoman Anna Herman told journalists.

Pro-Yushchenko lawmaker Ihor Ostash called Saturday's developments in parliament "an attempt at revenge — a blue-and-white revolution in parliament," referring to Yanukovich's campaign colors.

"Thousands of Yushchenko supporters massed outside the parliament building, breaking into regular chants of 'Yushchenko!' as lawmakers deliberated."

The legislature had also been expected to demand that President Leonid Kuchma fire Yanukovich and appoint a new Cabinet following a non-binding, no-confidence vote earlier this week, but the opposition motion failed to come to a vote.



AP

A Ukrainian man protests outside the parliament building in Kiev, Ukraine, on Saturday as lawmakers debated changes to electoral laws designed to prevent fraud in a rerun of the presidential election later this month.

Rescuers aid victims of Philippines storm

BY OLIVER TEVES
The Associated Press

REAL, Philippines — Helicopters delivered food to famished survivors and picked up casualties as the weather cleared on Saturday in villages ravaged by back-to-back storms that left 640 people dead and nearly 400 missing in the northern Philippines.

Officials, worried over rapidly dwindling relief goods, asked for more food, clothes, medicine and construction materials to help thousands of villagers overcome the devastation from the storm and typhoon.

In the worst-hit coastal town of Real in Quezon province, about 45 miles east of Manila, hundreds of residents lined up for food at a school turned into a relief center.

"If there's a continuous flow of support, we can make it," Mayor Arsenio Ramalosa said as he supervised the distribution of food and relief goods. "But at the moment, the government's relief supplies would only be good for three days."

Official figures released earlier said more than 650 people had died in the storms, but the latest tally released Saturday put the confirmed figure at 640.

President Gloria Macapagal Arroyo, her boots muddied after visiting typhoon-ravaged areas near Real, received loud applause from residents of the town, where

about 240 people were killed and 144 remained missing.

Arroyo told villagers and soldiers: "Congratulations, you are heroes."

About 90 percent of the mostly thatched houses in Real, a coastal town of about 40,000 farmers and fishermen, were damaged when floodwaters uprooted trees and sent boulders and debris rampaging down nearby hills that many say were denuded by loggers.

Reinforcing a widely held belief that years of illegal logging set off the deluge, Arroyo told reporters: "I'm cancelling all [logging] permits here and suspending issuance of all others."

Arroyo said illegal loggers would be prosecuted like terrorists, kidnappers, drug traffickers and other hardened criminals and called for unity amid the disaster.

Most of the devastation was wrought by a tropical storm that blew through northeastern provinces late Monday, killing at least 527 people, military Chief of Staff Gen. Efren Abu said Friday.

Hardest hit was Quezon province, where 484 bodies have been recovered and 352 people were still missing, he said.

About 500 soldiers plodded by foot, over treacherous ground and through deep mud, to bring relief goods and help search for the missing in far-flung villages in Quezon isolated by broken bridges and blocked roads.



Villagers wait outside the San Pablo Parish church for the distribution of relief goods in the typhoon-ravaged town of Dingalan in Aurora province, northern Philippines on Saturday. Relief goods started to come to famished survivors as the weather cleared in villages ravaged by back-to-back storms that left 640 people dead and nearly 400 missing in the northern Philippines.

Putin hopes to bolster Turkey ties on historic trip

BY SUZAN FRASER
The Associated Press

ANKARA, Turkey — Historic rivals Turkey and Russia have swapped centuries of rivalry for influence in central Asia, the Balkans and the Caucasus. Most recently, they bickered over routes to carry energy resources to world markets and traded accusations that each supports the other's militant groups.

But underneath that antagonism, the two have quietly woven a web of economic ties and are eyeing even closer cooperation.

The process will receive an official consecration on Sunday, when Russian President Vladimir Putin travels to Ankara in a visit rich in symbolism. Putin will be the first Russian

leader ever to pay an official visit to Turkey.

The Russian leader is to meet Turkish President Ahmet Necdet Sezer and Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and oversee the signing of six cooperation agreements, including defense, finance and energy accords.



Putin

The two-day visit "will be a new boost for Turkish-Russian relations," Sezer spokesman Sermet Atacalan said Friday.

Turkey and Russia have been rivals for centuries.

At the height of their powers, the Ottoman empire and Czarist Russia were locked in a struggle for regional supremacy. Friction between the two precipitated the Crimean War and they were on opposite sides of World War I. More recently, Turkey was NATO's easternmost front during the Cold War.

After the fall of the Soviet Union, Turkey and Russia competed for control in Central Asia and the Caucasus, where Turkic states gained independence. Economically more powerful, Russia has in recent years maintained its dominance in the region.

But since the end of the Cold War, Turkey and Russia have also been concentrating on trade. Today, Russia is Turkey's second largest trading partner, after Germany. Turkey is a major consum-

er of Russian natural gas, and Turkey's Mediterranean coast is a favorite destination for Russian tourists.

Putin's trip, originally scheduled for September, was postponed after the Beslan school tragedy in which more than 330 people were killed in a siege that Chechen rebels claimed responsibility for.

The Chechnya conflict is expected to feature high on the agenda during Putin's two-day visit. Many Turks trace their ancestry to Chechnya and other parts of the Caucasus, and Turks sympathize with their fellow Muslims in the war-ravaged Russian region.

Russia has called on Turkey to crack down on Turkish charities that it claims channel funds and weapons to Chechen rebels. Earli-

er this month, Russian officials said their forces in Chechnya killed two Turkish militants who were fighting alongside Chechen separatists.

On Friday, Turkish authorities apprehended 10 suspected Chechen militants and two pro-Chechen Turks in an apparent gesture to Putin.

"Russia's greatest concern is the support from certain Chechen civil organizations inside Turkey to Chechen terrorist movements," said Seyfi Tashan, director of the Ankara-based Foreign Policy Institute.

Turkey has in the past accused Russia of supporting Kurdish rebels who have waged a war for autonomy in Turkey's southeast since 1984. The war has killed some 37,000 people.

Actor almost was 'sleepless' in Belgium, officials say

BY CONSTANT BRAND
The Associated Press

BRUSSELS, Belgium — Belated news that Hollywood star Tom Hanks plans to attend remembrance ceremonies for the 60th anniversary of the Battle of the Bulge this month sent tourism officials scurrying to find him a place to stay since all hotel rooms were taken.

Tourism officials said Friday that Hanks was planning to stay Dec. 15-19 in the southeast town of Bastogne, where commemorative ceremonies are to be held for one of the bloodiest battles of World War II.

Officials later said, however, they have yet to receive final confirmation from Hanks whether he would join a 25-member veterans group that made the longstanding request on his behalf.

Some 80,000 American soldiers were killed, wounded or went missing during Hitler's last desperate stand to reverse the al-

lied advance. German casualties numbered between 80,000 and 120,000.

Many hotels have sold out across the Ardennes region over a year ahead of the anniversary, officials said.

"All rooms have been booked since July," Emily Louvinque from the Bastogne tourism office told Belgian daily De Morgen. "Last week we got a request for a room from American actor Tom Hanks, but we didn't have any more rooms. We made an urgent call across the country to see if any one could put him up, and we found a place he could rent downtown."

The tourist office said phones have been ringing off the hook over the past few days with many townspeople offering to put up

Hanks and his entourage.

Tourist operators offered the Hanks group a house they could rent in the center of town.

"They wanted a spacious house with a lot of room, because he will be staying here for several days," Didier Joris, owner of the house told VTM television.

The anniversary of the Ardennes offensive is expected to draw thousands, including some 80 American veterans and King Albert II of Belgium and Grand Duke Henri of neighboring Luxembourg.

Highlighted events include a special night flight Dec. 16 at the U.S. Marchand military memorial, located just outside of Bastogne and military parades over the Dec. 18 weekend.

Hanks, known for his lead role in "Saving Private Ryan" and collaboration with Hollywood director Steven Spielberg on the TV series "Band of Brothers," was expected to travel to the Ardennes with eight veterans of the famed Easy Company of the U.S. Army's 101st Airborne Division.

Hanks

China launches new sub

WASHINGTON — China has launched the first submarine in a new class of nuclear subs designed to fire intercontinental ballistic missiles. U.S. defense officials said Friday.

The submarine is, at a minimum, months away from having missiles installed and going on a cruise, one official said, discussing foreign weapons developments only on the condition of anonymity.

Still, it is further evidence of China's intentions to expand both its nuclear weapons and submarine forces, officials say. It was widely known that China was building the new class but the launch is far ahead of what U.S. intelligence expected, one official said.

It would be China's first submarine capable of launching nuclear weapons that could reach the United States from the country's home waters, officials said.

From The Associated Press



YOUR MONEY

Be specific when filling out a living will

BY LAURA MECKLER

The Associated Press

WASHINGTON — Patients checking into hospitals and clients meeting with their lawyers often are advised to take a simple step toward planning for the future: fill out a living will.

But the reality is, too often, they don't really work.

The concept is straightforward: Outline your wishes while you're healthy to guide doctors and family members who might have to make life-or-death decisions for you later on. Would you want to linger in a vegetative state if it were unlikely you'd ever wake up? Or would you rather be allowed to die? But end-of-life medical questions often involve much more complicated medical and moral questions. Many living wills are so vague as to be useless.

"We've tried to take very complicated, difficult, painful, wrenching decisions that make a single yes or no. These are never easy decisions and they're never black-and-white," said Sean Morrison, a geriatrician at Mount Sinai Medical School in New York.

A will might direct that no "extraordinary measures" be used if someone's condition is hopeless. But what is an extraordinary measure? And what is hopeless? If there's a 10 percent chance a treatment will extend someone's life by six months, is that good enough? Should an end-stage Alzheimer's patient, whose life is greatly di-

Ways to make your wishes known

Some tips for end-of-life planning:

■ **Talk to your doctor** about your wishes and values concerning end-of-life care. What would make life not worth living for you? Ask your doctor to note your views on your wishes.

■ **Give a family member or trusted friend** the legal authority to make medical decisions for you if you are unable. Talk to that person about your values and wishes.

■ **Consider a living will.** If you do, be as specific as possible. You might include information about whether you want life-sustaining treatment, types of treatment you would or would not want and under what conditions; preferences about artificial nutrition and hydration; and what any pain control medication you want and under what circumstances; and whether you want to be an organ donor.

■ **Consider using a standardized living will** that addresses some of the basic questions such as the popular "Five Wishes" document produced by the nonprofit Aging with Dignity. (Available for \$5 each.)

■ **Update your living will** if you are diagnosed with a serious or terminal disease to address the medical situations that are most common to people with your condition. Talk with your doctor about what to expect.

■ **Talk to family members** about your general wishes to minimize disputes if decisions must be made for you.

■ **Keep your living will** in an accessible, easy-to-find spot. Tell your family where to find the document. Give copies to your doctor, family members likely to be involved in decision-making, hospitals that might treat you and your lawyer.

— The Associated Press

minished but still has moments of joy, be given antibiotics to treat an infection that otherwise might bring a quicker end?

There are other problems. People change their minds after they write their living wills but don't update them. Many living wills never make it to the bedside, left in a file cabinet or safety deposit box. And family and doctors often are poor judges of deciphering the patient's wishes even when they have the wills in hand.

"Most people believe that a living will can be written that is effective and that genuinely conveys real information that can be used in making decisions, and that is not true," said Carl Schneider, an expert in medical law at the University of Michigan Law School.

Since 1990, hospitals have been required in most states to offer all patients the chance to fill out a living will. But despite

the law and despite several high-profile end-of-life death reviews, most people still don't have living wills.

"Enough. The living will has failed, and it is time to say so," Schneider and colleague Angela Fagerlin wrote in a bioethics journal, the Hastings Center Report.

A better end-of-life option, experts say, is to give a trusted loved one the legal authority to make decisions if you become incapacitated. Two large studies found more than 70 percent of people would rather have doctors rely on family rather than living wills in making decisions about their care.

This has its own problems — the designated decision-maker may not understand what the patient's wishes are, and picking one person to make decisions could cause tension inside a family.

The stereotypical conflict, doctors and nurses say, comes when the adult child arrives from out of town feeling guilty he hasn't spent more time with his parent and resists steps to end the parent's life, even as a brother or sister who lives nearby says this is what the parent wanted.

Still, experts say designating someone to make decisions allows for more flexibility than living wills.

Another choice that holds less legal weight but perhaps more influence: thoughtful conversations in advance with your regular doctors.

SEE WILLS ON PAGE 23

Planning ahead for home maintenance will benefit budget

Susie Besaw, from the book "The Savvy Sailor's Spouse," is new to the military lifestyle but is eager to learn more about how to manage her family and her new lifestyle through the monthly Family Readiness Group meetings of her husband Jack's new command.

After the regular business for our family readiness group meeting was concluded, Evelyn looked for our guest speaker, Lt. Dan Dowse. He was sitting patiently in the back.

Evelyn said, "Members of the Family Readiness Group, I want to introduce tonight's speaker on home maintenance, Navy Lt. Dan Dowse, commander of the Seabee Construction Battalion Unit 405. Dowse is a friend of my family. We grew up around the corner from each other, and I'm proud to have him here."

"Thank you, Evelyn," Dowse said in an enthusiastic voice, as he walked to the front of the room.

"We are part of the 13th Naval Construction Regiment, which consists of more than 2,700 active duty and 5,700 Reserve officers

assigned to the Pacific Fleet Seabees. Our construction tasks in the Pacific range from renovating living quarters, ports and airfields to constructing major operational training and support facilities. But tonight, I am just going to talk about basic home maintenance at the request of my old neighbor Evelyn.

"The average homeowner should budget maybe \$5,000 a year for their home's operational expenses, including repairs, utilities and household goods depending on their type of home and location. Why is it important we budget for repairs?"

Money U.

"Because things break," a petty officer replied. "Close," Dowse replied. "We budget for repairs so we're prepared when things break." "Isn't it hard to know when things are going to stop working?" the petty officer asked.

"It's easier than you think," Dowse replied. "Just make a list of each maintenance item on your home and determine the item's life span and future replacement cost."

Dowse handed out a stack of papers. "I know my dishwasher is 7

Home maintenance schedule

AREA	ITEM	Year In Span	Life Span	Cost	Year Vendor/Inflation Factor	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
BASEMENT	Clothes washer	1990	14	2004	\$ 400	ApplianceRUS 356-9087		\$416		
BASEMENT	Clothes dryer	1990	20	2005	\$ 550	ApplianceRUS 356-9087		\$595		
EXTERIOR	Roof	1996	20	2006	\$ 2,600	Roofers 356-2342				\$2,925
EXTERIOR	Front storm door	1984	20	2004	\$ 200	Home Depot 365-6547				
HEAT/AC	Air conditioner	1988	15	2003	\$ 1,500	Joe Smith, Inc. 356-2365	\$1,500			
HEAT/AC	Furnace	1984	20	2004	\$ 1,500	Joe Smith, Inc. 356-2365				
INTERIOR	Attic fan	1994	20	2014	\$ 150	Home Depot 365-6547				
INTERIOR	Bathroom	1994	30	2024	\$ 500	Contractor 356-7865				
INTERIOR	Basement rug	2002	12	2012	\$ 700	Carpets-Mats 356-0987				
KITCHEN	Dishwasher	1994	12	2007	\$ 275	ApplianceRUS 356-9087				\$322
KITCHEN	Refrigerator	1995	20	2015	\$ 800	ApplianceRUS 356-9087				
PLUMBING	Hot water heater	1993	12	2005	\$ 500	Joe Smith, Inc. 356-2365				\$541
TOTAL FUTURE YEARLY COSTS							\$1,500	\$416	\$1,136	\$2,925

Source: Ralph Nelson

Stars and Stripes

years old and the average dishwasher lasts 12 years. If it costs \$275 to replace my dishwasher this year, it will cost about \$322 in 12 years at 4 percent inflation.

You also can add a column and write the name of a reliable vendor next to each item. I do this to help my wife. I want her to know who to call if the dishwasher or when I'm away repairing airfields. I was listening earlier when Mrs. Lopez said she's in the process of helping to find reliable vendors in the area for the command families, and I think that's an excellent idea."

Dowse continued, "If you do the home maintenance plan right, it'll include anything in your home that may need to be replaced or replaced over the next five to 10 years.

"Are there any questions before I continue?"

"Having the names of vendors is great, but what about emergencies?" Peggy Lopez asked.

"You need to become familiar with some shut-offs for your utilities of your home in case of emergencies, like these:

- Main water shut-off valve.
- Main gas or oil shut-off valve.
- Master electrical circuit breaker.

"So if a pipe is leaking, turn off your home's water with the main water shut-off valve and then call the plumber. This will prevent damage from occurring."

Similarly, it's a good idea to know where all the shut-off valves are in your house. Do yourself and your family a favor and review each of your appliances and sinks — whether you are a renter or a homeowner — for any shut-off valves. Knowing this may allow you to prevent a catastrophe."

"We were many nods from the audience.

Dowse continued, "The last thing I want to talk about is keys.

There is nothing worse than being locked out of your house. One thing I recommend to all of my sailors, and I, too, is to keep a spare home key in your wallet or purse. Also, try to make a trusting relationship with your neighbor so they can hold a spare key and watch out for your home when you are not there. But, for safety's sake, never write the location of the lock on any of the keys you carry."

"That's it. Happy home maintenance."

Similarly, it's a good idea to know where all the shut-off valves are in your house. Do yourself and your family a favor and review each of your appliances and sinks — whether you are a renter or a homeowner — for any shut-off valves. Knowing this may allow you to prevent a catastrophe."

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Sunda Horoscope

As Sagittarian energy rules the sky, a forceful optimism steers us.

We don't have to believe in the power of positive thinking to experience its results. Instead of seeing the correlation between our thoughts and the outcome, we may chalk it up to good luck when happy events occur. It doesn't matter who gets the credit as long as credit is given.

TODAY'S BIRTHDAY (December 5). Thrilling adventures in your personal life make this year lively and fabulous! Make your mind up now about where to put your financial focus because the stars give you a serious push in the next five weeks. Investments in February secure your future. The obstacles in your love life are what make it such an opportunity to grow closer than ever.

ARIES (March 21-April 19). Your family or friends may ask burdensome favors, such as covering for them when you know they are up to no good. Try not to get mixed into the lie. Be evasive. Commit to nothing. Buy time. You learn from others' mistakes.

TAURUS (April 20-May 20). While people close to you wander aimlessly, you're getting a message from the cosmos about your special mission. So round up the troops, and start marching for a natural-born leader. Love tip: Hold out for a hero.

GEMINI (May 21-June 21). You know more than you think you do. It's quite fascinating to start a dialogue with your own subconscious mind. Dreams answer your questions and unravel your problems. Write them down as you remember them.

CANCER (June 22-July 22). It's an ambitious cycle you've entered, and you're building quite a reputation. There's no need to remind anyone what you've accomplished. Be mellow, laugh, and keep things low key. Potential sweethearts are fascinated.

LEO (July 23-Aug. 22). Relationships seem complicated, but you can solve problems in 15 minutes of concentrated effort. Get clear about your expectations, and

realize the other person brought a few of his or her own expectations to the table, too.

VIRGO (Aug. 23-Sept. 22). The reason Bart Simpson is more popular than his sister Lisa is simple: No one likes a know-it-all. But Bart's friends are losers, and Lisa's life is fulfilling and multifaceted. Your choices reflect which Simpson you'd rather be.

LIBRA (Sept. 23-Oct. 23). You'll be flirting with life's high-goods and may explore your love affair with fashion or satisfy your penchant for over-priced art. This makes more fiscally reasonable loved ones pesky and irritable, but what the heck?

SCORPIO (Oct. 24-Nov. 21). Stick your neck out. When you express interest in a project, you may wind up running things. It's one way into an elite circle. The tension between you and that cute someone is a sign of mutual attraction.

SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22-Dec. 21). Just when you thought you'd seen it all, enter the weirdos and eccentric geniuses, and they want you as their own. Be open to adding friends to your life, and you will add employment opportunities without even realizing it.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22-Jan. 19). When you speak about love, you speak with a deep, penetrating, forceful tone. It's because you've figured out things you're looking for that you weren't getting. Now, you're ready, and you know it's out there. Go get it.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20-Feb. 18). Your ideas about what "good" is are morphing into something more meaningful than the surface requirements you held yourself to before. Good posture, nutrition and manners seem less important than good, clean fun.

PISCES (Feb. 19-March 20). If perfection is boring, then practice makes snores. This is a fine time to wing it and see what happens. This is true for dates, chores, social gatherings and creative endeavors. Loosen up, and live a little.

Creators Syndicate

Holiday Mathis



intire, but what the heck?

Identity theft attempts are best ignored or reported

Dear Abby: You printed a letter from "Eugene in N.J." about a letter he received saying that he was "the sole beneficiary of a \$12 million estate." He said he responded by sending this information on a bank account that he "no longer does business with, but had a \$2.83 balance remaining." That was the wrong move! Now the thieves have his name, address and account number. It doesn't matter if the account was closed or open — thieves counterfeited checks using the information he gave them. Scams such as "Eugene" described are a common way identity thieves gather information. Unfortunately, the actions he took in his anger and frustration have exposed him to identity theft. It is important to understand that e-mail scans are sent out to millions of people. If you answer — even to stop writing — you will be put on a "sucker" list.

■ Some common scams people need to avoid:
■ No company is going to call or e-mail you to verify an account, ask for your Social Security number, or any bank or credit card numbers. PERIOD! This is called "phishing." Account verification scans look very real, but are ALL SCAMS. Do not answer them no matter how convinced you are that it is a real company.

Dear Abby



■ You have NOT won a lottery in the Netherlands, or Canada, or anywhere else, if you didn't first buy a ticket here in the U.S.A.

■ Question any company that offers you a prize, but asks for a fee or your Social Security number, and verify the existence of that company through the Better Business Bureau, and confirm independently that the prize is real.

■ A stranger did not die and leave you money.

■ The Nigerian scam has now morphed into a creative writing exercise about all kinds of people needing your help to transfer money from one account to another. This practice is called money laundering, and it is illegal.

■ You may also be telephone-scanned with similar offers. Be on the alert for suspicious callers, and never give out your Social Security number or a credit card number to anyone who calls you.

Thank you, Abby, for helping your readers to understand how thieves steal a person's identity.

— Linda Foley, Co-Executive Director, Identity Theft Resource Center

Dear Linda: Thank you for sharing this valuable information with my readers and me. Readers, my experts tell me the only safe way to deal with a scam is to either hit the "delete" key, or forward it to the Federal Trade Commission at spam@uce.gov and THEN delete it. As tempting as it may seem, do not engage any of the scammers in a dialogue.

The Identity Theft Resource Center is a nonprofit program, based in San Diego, that is grant- and donation-funded. Its mission is to help victims of identity theft and consumers. For further information on scams, including examples of common scams, visit the Web site at www.idtheftcenter.org.

Confidential to "Disgusted With Myself in Tucson, Ariz.": Don't be so hard on yourself. Even a clock that isn't working is right twice a day.

Letters for this column — with your name and phone number — should be addressed to Dear Abby, P.O. Box 6940, Los Angeles CA 90069. Readers can write to Abby on the Internet at <http://www.uepress.com/dearabby>. Universal Press Syndicate

Light a candle for families grieving the death of a child

Dear Annie: When a child dies in your family, the world changes and you will never again be the same person. Life goes on, but priorities change, and remembering the child who has died is an important way of traveling through your grief journey to the other side. The holiday season is especially difficult as old traditions often become a way to new, more meaningful traditions that help to remember the child, sibling or grandchild who has died.

That is why The Compassionate Friends created the Worldwide Candle Lighting. The Compassionate Friends is a self-help bereavement organization for families that have experienced the death of a child.

This year marks the eighth anniversary of the first Candle Lighting, and tens of thousands of families worldwide will participate from countries around the globe.

The Worldwide Candle Lighting is held the second Sunday in December, this year on Dec. 12. At 7 p.m. local time, each person lights a candle that burns for one

hour. Candles are first lit just west of the International Date Line and an hour later in the next time zone, eventually creating a 24-hour wave of light to remember all children who have died, no matter their age or country of origin.

I would ask your readers to join The Compassionate Friends and allied service organizations by lighting a candle at home with friends and family, or attending one of the hundreds of planned services throughout the United States.

For more information on this touching tribute, visit The Compassionate Friends at www.compassionatefriends.org or call, toll-free, 1-877-969-0010. We also ask that your readers visit our Web site on Dec. 12 and place a memorial message in our online Remembrance Book.

— Patricia Loder, Executive Director, The Compassionate Friends, USA

Dear Patricia Loder: We appreciate the opportunity to ask our readers once again to participate in the Worldwide Candle Lighting in remembrance of all the

children who have died. The loss of a child, no matter the age or circumstances, is one of life's harshest blows.

Please light a candle next Sunday, Dec. 12, at 7 p.m., and remember every child who is no longer with us.

Dear Annie: My wife and I have been married for one year but don't see each other much because we're both in the Army. Lately, she hasn't wanted to talk to me. She says she needs to "find herself." I care about her, but I'm not sure I want to be with someone who doesn't want to be with me. Any ideas?

— Arkansas
Dear Arkansas: It's difficult to maintain a healthy marriage when you are separated for long periods of time, and even when the two of you have the opportunity to live together again, you will need time to rebuild your relationship. The Army offers counseling, and you and your wife should each make use of it.

Annie's Mailbox is written by Kathy Mitchell and Marcy Sugar, longtime editors of *Dear Abby*. Please e-mail your questions to annie@mailbox.comcast.net, or write to: Annie's Mailbox, c/o Creators Syndicate, 577 W. Century Blvd., Suite 700, Los Angeles, CA 90045. Creators Syndicate

Drifting onto word 'stranded'

The other day, I was "stranded" as a result of car trouble. While waiting for the tow truck, I passed the time in contemplation of the origin of "stranded." I didn't get very far with it; can you find the answer for me?

— T. C., Albuquerque, N.M.

An old but still common word for the shore that you may have heard is "strand." It comes from the Old Norse word "strand," meaning "shore." In the early 17th century a verb emerged from this noun with the meaning "to run, drive, or cause to drift

onto a strand," in other words, "to run aground."

It wasn't a long step for an extended sense to develop from this verb: "to leave in a strange or unfavorable place especially without funds or means to depart." This, of course, is the sense that you are familiar with.

We hope that your car troubles have passed and you are "stranded" no more.

This column was prepared by the editors of Merriam-Webster's Collegiate Dictionary, Tenth Edition. Readers may send questions to Merriam-Webster's Wordplay, P.O. Box 261, 47 Federal St., Springfield, Mass. 01102.

Annie's Mailbox



Yankees rework bullpen, deal away Lofton

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — The New York Yankees began reshaping their roster Friday, sending outfielder Kenny Lofton and more than \$1.5 million to the Philadelphia Phillies for setup man Felix Rodriguez and also reacquiring Mike Stanton from the Mets.

Stunned by Boston in the AL championship series, the Yankees are expected to make bigger moves later in the offseason, with free-agent center fielder Carlos Beltran and Arizona ace Randy Johnson figuring to be their top targets.

"The winter is not complete yet," Yankees General Manager Brian Cashman said.

The Yankees got Stanton and \$975,000 from the Mets for Felix Heredia in a swap of left-handed relievers. Stanton waived his no-trade clause to rejoin his former team.

"Everybody wants to play for the Yankees," Rodriguez said.

Lofton, 37, will be going to his ninth major league team. A six-time All-Star earlier in his career, he hit .275 with seven stolen bases in 83 games in his only season with New York.

"It's been very tough. I'm the



type of guy that likes to be settled down," he said on a conference call. "It's been very tough the last three or four years."

"Everybody in New York understood I wanted to play. I just wanted to have an opportunity to perform and be part of the team," he said. "I didn't feel as much a part of the team."

Phillies General Manager Ed Wade envisioned Lofton starting ahead of Marlon Byrd and Jason Michaels.

"A player like Kenny is a big step forward for us," Wade said. "Going into spring training, we believe Kenny is our center fielder and will be a catalyst for this club."

Rodriguez, 32, was 5-8 with one save in 76 games for San Francisco and Philadelphia last season. The Giants traded him to the Phillies for outfielder Ricky Ledee and a minor league pitcher in late July.

Rockies pitcher Neagle cited for solicitation

LAKEWOOD, Colo. — Colo-

rado Rockies pitcher Denny Neagle was cited Friday for solicitation after a woman in his car said he paid her \$40 for oral sex, police said.

Neagle, who has not pitched in more than a year because of injuries, was pulled over early Friday in a Denver suburb after an officer saw his sports utility vehicle speeding, police spokesman Steve Davis said.

Neagle was asked why his belt was unbuckled, the woman said Neagle had paid her for sex, Davis said.

Neither Neagle nor Russell was taken into custody because the charges were minor misdemeanors. Neagle was issued a court for summons for Jan. 27.

The woman, Jill Russell of Denver, was issued a citation on a charge of prostitution and a court summons for Jan. 13.

Rockies President Keli McGreger called the allegation "extremely serious" and said the team was still gathering information.

Backman sentenced for probation violation

KENNEWICK, Wash. — Fired Arizona Diamondbacks manager Wally Backman was sentenced to 10 days in jail Friday for violating his probation three years ago.

Backman was fired by Arizona last month just four days after he was hired. He was dismissed following revelations he had been arrested twice and struggled with financial problems.

Benton County District Judge Holly Hollenbeck could have ordered Backman to serve as much as 364 days for the probation violation.

Instead, he ordered the 10-day sentence and a \$250 fine.

The Diamondbacks' management had been unaware of Backman's problems until media reports that followed his hiring.

Astros re-sign Vizcaino

HOUSTON — Infielder Jose Vizcaino and the Houston Astros agreed Friday to a \$1.25 million, one-year contract.

Vizcaino, 36, batted .274 with three home runs, a career-high 21 doubles and 33 RBIs for Houston last season. He played in 138 games with 53 starts, most of which came at the end of the season after shortstop Adam Everett went on the disabled list.

"We're very pleased that Jose has decided to continue his relationship with the organization," new Astros General Manager Tim Lincecum said. "Jose was a big reason for our success this season, and we look forward to his contribution in 2005."

Vizcaino, who could also earn up to \$500,000 in performance bonuses, has played with the Astros for four seasons, hitting .280 with 12 homers and 110 RBIs. A 15-year major league veteran, Vizcaino has a .272 career average with 33 homers and 449 RBIs.



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Trophy, \$5M check cap Busch's season

Nextel Cup champ leads drivers into Manhattan for awards party

BY MIKE HARRIS
The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Kurt Busch's busy week of celebration was capped Friday night with his acceptance of NASCAR's Nextel Cup championship trophy.

A day earlier, he walked out of a midtown hotel and into a crowd of people calling his name and asking for autographs.

He was on the way to lead a noisy, colorful procession of stock cars in a slow parade lap across Manhattan with hundreds of people lining the streets to take in the strange sight.

Later Thursday, he addressed champions of NASCAR's far-ranging regional series, telling them they could be where he is someday — if they are both good and lucky.

The 26-year-old Busch has won most of the season's races, but the TV shows, the dinners, the fans, he said in a rare quiet moment. "I said in a rare quiet moment, 'I didn't think it would ever end. Now, I don't want it to end. It's just been amazing.'"

"On Tuesday, I couldn't believe everything that was happening — the TV shows, the dinners, the fans," he said in a rare quiet moment. "I didn't think it would ever end. Now, I don't want it to end. It's just been amazing."

The finale to the biggest week of his life came when Nextel — ending its first season as the series' title sponsor — presented Busch with a check for \$5.36 million from the 2004 points fund.

That brought Busch's total earnings this year to \$9,677,543.

"It's truly mind-boggling," he said. "The money is something you don't even think about as you're racing for a championship and trying to keep your head above water and just do the best job you can for yourself, your team and the series."

Busch said he was particularly pleased to be able to share the head table at the awards ceremony with team owner Jack Roush and crew chief Jimmy Fennig. "It's been a fantastic year," Busch said. "We dodged a lot of bullets and I'm just so happy to be able to give Jack his second straight championship and Jimmy his first one. I owe those guys so much."

"Jack took a chance on a driver who maybe had some raw ability but was unproven. We knew we had a championship team and championship equipment, and Jimmy gave me so much of his experience to draw from to learn to be a championship driver."

Matt Kenseth gave Roush his



Kurt Busch, the 2004 NASCAR Nextel Cup champion, makes an acceptance speech at the NASCAR Awards Banquet in New York's Waldorf Astoria Hotel on Friday.

first Cup title last season, his 16th on a car owner's circuit.

"Both Matt and Kurt have something in common," Roush said. "They are determined to win."

"It shouldn't surprise anybody that Kurt is a champion. It just took him a little while to learn how to get it done, and this won't be his last championship in this decade."

Each of the drivers who made it into NASCAR's first-ever 10-man, 10-race Chase for the Nextel Cup championship was honored Friday night. Also recognized was 11th-place finisher Jamie McMurray. Each collected checks for at least \$1 million.

Nextel, which replaced longtime series sponsor Winston this season, was given the NASCAR Marketing Achievement Award.

Busch, who at times has clashed on and off track with other drivers and has more often than not been booed by the fans, said he thoroughly enjoyed the congratulations from his competitors and the warm smiles and cheers of fans throughout the week here.

"I'm going to do my best to be the kind of champion this year that everyone will be proud of," he said. "And, maybe if I do a good enough job, they'll let me do it again next year. It's a lot of fun."

Bryan twins rescue U.S. in Davis Cup

The Associated Press

SEVILLE, Spain — The Bryan twins saved the United States from a quick exit in the Davis Cup final.

Bob and Mike Bryan defeated the Spanish pair of Tommy Robredo and Juan Carlos Ferrero on Saturday, winning 6-0, 6-3, 6-2 to leave Spain with a 2-1 lead going into Sunday's reverse singles.

The Spanish are trying to win their second Davis Cup title. The Americans are trying to win their 32nd title, but their first since 1995.

The Bryans won the first set in 27 minutes, sweeping the Spanish duo as U.S. teammates jumped off the bench to celebrate hard-won points.

Playing before another sellout of 27,200 in Olympic Stadium, the Spanish seemed to have a bit in the second. But the Americans broke Spain's serve to take a 3-1 lead, and Bob Bryan served out the 6-3 set victory.

The Americans broke Spain in the first game of the final set and ended up closing out the match in 1 hour, 39 minutes.

The Bryans — Bob the left-hander and Mike the right-hander — are now 5-0 in the Davis Cup and have not lost a set since joining the team 15 months ago.

Spanish captain Jordi Arrese named Ferrero on Saturday to play doubles with Robredo, replacing 18-year-old Rafael Nadal. Nadal was called in to replace Ferrero in Friday's singles and defeated Andy Roddick.

Carlos Moya defeated Mardy Fish in straight sets on Saturday.

Miller scores fourth win as U.S. goes 1-2

The Associated Press

BEAVER CREEK, Colo. — Bode Miller won his fourth World Cup ski race this season and Danny Rahlves was second Friday — the first 1-2 finish for the United States in the downhill.

"It's about time," Rahlves said. "It's what we wanted — both of us on the podium."

Miller and Rahlves started season saying each wanted to win the overall World Cup title. Miller, the World Cup leader, has won four of the five races so far and was second Thursday in the super-G won by Stephan Georgi of Austria.

"It's far too early to think about the overall," said Miller, trying to become the first American man since Phil Mahre in 1983 to win the overall title.

Miller finished in 1 minute, 39.76 seconds for the 16th win of his career. Rahlves was second in 1:39.92 and Michael Walchofer of Austria was third in 1:40.15.

"It was a flying," Miller said. "I was rolling — I was doing things with instinct and reaction. A phenomenal feeling."

When Rahlves came through the finish of the steep run, Miller and Bryon Friedman, who was seventh, stormed into the sun-bathed finish area. All three

Sports briefs

hugged, waving a big American flag for the cheering crowd.

USA's Kildow surprises with first World Cup ski victory

LAKE LOUISE, Alberta — Lindsey Kildow of the United States won her first World Cup race Friday, taking the season's first downhill in 1 minute, 23.44 seconds.

The 20-year-old Kildow battled wind and swirling snow on a shortened men's Olympic downhill course.

"It's so awesome," said Kildow, whose previous best finishes were third and fifth last year in downhill at Cortina, Italy. "I just tried to stay as relaxed as possible. The main thing for me is not to be nervous because I have the skiing ability."

Carole Monillet-Carles of France was second in 1:23.63, followed by Heidi Gerg of Germany in 1:23.69.

German Olympian found guilty of riding doped horse

GENEVA — Ludwig Beerbaum of Germany was found guilty of riding a doped horse at the Ath-

ens Olympics, and the International Equestrian Federation said the country should lose its team jumping gold medal.

The International Olympic Committee's executive board can now strip Germany of its medal, giving the gold to the United States.

Last month, the German equestrian federation said a backup sample had confirmed the initial positive result for Beerbaum's horse, Goldfever. The rider, who has denied cheating, said the banned steroid betamethasone was contained in a skin ointment.

Colangelo has prostate cancer

PHOENIX — Longtime Phoenix sports executive Jerry Colangelo has prostate cancer and will have surgery Dec. 30 in New York.

"I've been advised that it's early, that it can be taken care of," the 65-year-old Colangelo said Friday. "The good news is, I can start off the year with a clean slate and that's the way I choose to look at it."

"One out of six males will get prostate cancer, so it's a big club out there. Life throws you hurdles and this is my time."

Colangelo is the Phoenix Suns' chairman and CEO and also headed the move to bring major league baseball to Phoenix.

Westwood leads in Sun City

SUN CITY, South Africa — Lee Westwood ignored temperatures in the high 90s to shoot a 1-under 71 Saturday and take the lead after three rounds of the Nedbank Challenge.

Westwood, who had a three-round total of 5-under 211, held a one-shot lead over Retief Goosen and a two-shot margin over Stuart Appleby heading into Sunday's final round.

Saturday's best round came from Jim Furyk, who shot a 6-under 66 that included eight birdies. He moved into a tie for sixth with Ernie Els.

Hornets trade for Dickau

NEW ORLEANS — The New Orleans Hornets traded veteran guard Darrell Armstrong to the Dallas Mavericks for third-year player Dan Dickau.

Armstrong, 36, has averaged 10.6 points and four assists in 93 games with New Orleans.

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Meyer passes on Notre Dame, accepts Florida job

BY MARK LONG

The Associated Press

GAINESVILLE, Fla. — Florida 1, Notre Dame 0.

The Gators beat Notre Dame to Utah coach Urban Meyer on Friday, lumping him away from the "can jam job" while the Fighting Irish.

Meyer snubbed Notre Dame, where he spent five seasons as an assistant, and agreed to coach the Gators, according to his sister.

Asked whether her younger

brother had taken the Florida job, Greg Escoe said, "Yes. It was a tough choice for him, but he's happy with his decision. He had two wonderful choices. He couldn't go wrong."

Meyer signed a seven-year deal worth \$14 million, according to The Gainesville Sun.

His wide-open offense should be welcomed at Florida, where Ron Zook never could satisfy fans who became accustomed to Steve Spurrier's innovative system that was fun to watch and tough to

stop. The Gators settled for Zook three years ago after Oklahoma's Bob Stoops and Denver Broncos coach Mike Shanahan spurned their offers.

Meyer will quadruple his \$300,000 salary and inherit a program with plenty of talent: The Gators finished 7-4, with three losses coming in the waning minutes.

But exactly why he chose Florida over Notre Dame was unknown.

"He didn't question his decision at all," Escoe said.

Meyer and Foley didn't return messages, and officials at both schools refused to confirm the hiring.

But Meyer's father, Bud, said his son had accepted the job.

"All the reports that are out there are correct," he said.

The Utes are 11-0 in their second season under Meyer, and are in line for a spot in the Bowl Championship Series.

Meyer, who also had success at Bowling Green before moving to Utah, has said he planned to

coach the Utes in a bowl game even if he took another job.

Most figured it would be Notre Dame, but the prospect of rebuilding the Irish amid high expectations and tough academic standards might have been daunting. The Fighting Irish fired Tyrone Willingham on Tuesday after three seasons, and immediately targeted Meyer, whose contract included a clause allowing to leave for jobs at Notre Dame, Ohio State or Michigan.

He met with Notre Dame officials on Thursday.

Bonds' statistics are likely to stand

BY JORGE ARANGURE JR.

The Washington Post

BALTIMORE — There is no sport more obsessed with numbers than baseball, but those in charge of the game's records say slugger Barry Bonds' statistics will remain intact — at least for now.

The San Francisco Chronicle reported in Friday's editions that Bonds admitted in grand jury testimony that he used several substances not denied knowing the substances were steroids.

The president of the Elias Sports Bureau Inc. — the official statistics bureau for M.L.B. — said the bureau would wait until Bonds is proven guilty of any wrongdoing before deciding to examine his records.

"I don't want to speculate on something that doesn't exist," Seymour Siwoff said. "We have nothing to say really. If something does happen we'll talk about it. In a sense, someone is conjecturing. They haven't accused Bonds of anything."

The most prized of Bonds' numbers is his single-season home run record of 73, set in 2001. Bonds is 53 home runs from breaking Hank Aaron's career home run mark, perhaps the most cherished record in baseball.

It would almost be impossible with one swoop to eliminate all of Bonds' numbers, said Rob Neyer, ESPN.com senior writer and noted baseball statistician.

"I wouldn't advocate doing that, and I don't think there is any way of doing it," Neyer said.

There is no mechanism to do it. If you got to the Baseball Encyclopedia, are you going to see nothing? Because baseball is a team game, everything has to add up."

If baseball did one day eliminate Bonds' 73 home runs in 2001, would that mean the San Francisco Giants that season have 73 less home runs? Would the home runs be eliminated from the statistics of those pitchers that allowed them, meaning their ERAs would be adjusted? Would final games of games be changed?

"Barry Bonds hit 73 home runs, there is no way around that," Neyer said.

And what about other noted cheats in baseball? Gaylord Perry has publicly admitted to throwing a spitball, yet his 314 wins remain

untouched. The late Ken Caminiti, who publicly admitted using steroids, was not forced to relinquish his MVP award from 1996.

An option would be to keep Bonds' statistics in the record books, but eliminate the distinction of the records he broke. In that scenario, Mark McGwire's 70 home runs in 1998 would be considered the season record. But as Neyer notes, McGwire also has faced suspicions of steroid use.

It would be almost impossible to assign some sort of asterisk to Bonds' numbers in the record books. The baseball did when Roger Maris hit 61 homers in 1961 to break Babe Ruth's season mark.

That asterisk was used to denote that Maris broke the record in 162 games, eight more games than it took Ruth. It was later removed.

It appears that the only change in Bonds' records may be in how some fans perceive them. His legacy may be the only thing affected.

"We're not going to engage in any speculation along these lines," said Steve Hirdt, Elias' executive vice president.

The Society of American Baseball Research, perhaps the premier baseball historical society, also declined to comment on what Bonds' reported admission would do to his records.

Barring a suspension, Bonds will break Aaron's record within the next two years and there might not be anything baseball can do to stop it.

It appears unlikely that any of Bonds' memorabilia will be removed from the National Baseball Hall of Fame and Museum. All of Pete Rose's items remain in the Hall of Fame despite the fact he was banned from baseball for gambling.

In 2003, the Hall of Fame X-rayed five items that had belonged to Sammy Sosa after the Chicago Cubs' outfielder was suspended for using a corked bat, and said they would not have removed them from display had they not corked. For now, the Hall of Fame remains quiet about Bonds.

"We don't comment on ongoing investigations," said Joe Widen, vice president of communications for the Hall of Fame. "We're staying clear of this."

Conte interview shown on ABC

The Associated Press

NEW YORK — Victor Conte said he supplied performance-enhancing drugs to track stars Marion Jones, Tim Montgomery and Kelli White, but stopped short of saying that Barry Bonds was a steroids user.

Conte, head of the lab that allegedly provided steroids and other banned drugs to elite athletes, reiterated comments first released by ABC a day earlier, and named names on "20/20" on Friday night.

He was indicted in February by the grand jury investigating the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative. Conte, BALCO vice president James Valente, Bonds' personal trainer Greg Anderson and track coach Remi Korchemny all have pleaded not guilty to the charges.

Conte said that he gave drugs to Anderson, but had no knowledge what became of the substances after that. He said Anderson could've given them to Bonds, but had no information whether they were passed on to the San Francisco Giants slugger.

Conte said he started supplying Jones with doping substances in the weeks leading up to the 2000 Olympics and watched as she injected herself with human growth hormone.

Jones, who won three gold and two bronze track and field medals in Sydney, repeatedly has denied ever using banned drugs.

"I think she made her decision and she's going to have to be accountable to the consequences of her decision," Conte said ABC.

"If she said she didn't use drugs, then she lied."

The fact that Jones has never failed a drug test came as no surprise to Conte, who developed chemical treatments that for a long time were undetectable by outdated testing methods.

He smiled when he was shown a letter sent to Montgomery, informing the track star that he passed a drug test during the time Conte said he was using illegal substances.

"There are thousands of those letters that athletes have, and I'm sure they chuckle every time they get them," Conte said on "20/20."

Conte said he provided various drugs to Jones, Montgomery and White and designed doping regimens that included the previously undetectable steroid THG, the endurance-enhancing hormone EPO, human growth hormone and insulin.

He also said that he gave substances to Oakland Raiders player Bill Romanowski, Barret Robbins, Chris Cooper, and Dana Stubblefield.

White, a sprinter who forfeited two world titles and accepted a two-year ban, was the only athlete interviewed on the "20/20" show.

"He made me believe that if I followed a certain protocol of supplements and drugs that I could become No. 1 in the world," White said of Conte. "I felt that so many people were doing it that I would just become one of the others."

Once Conte and his clients were exposed, he said, he was standing there.

"It was all my fault," he said. "They had listened and trusted me and I was the one that was guiding them."

Scandal: Revelations lead to further questioning of integrity in sports

SCANDAL, FROM BACK PAGE

Bonds testified that in 2003 he used a clear substance and a cream given to him by his friend and trainer, Greg Anderson, but didn't know they were steroids, according to the report.

During the three-hour proceeding, the Chronicle reported, two prosecutors presented Bonds with documents that allegedly detailed his use of a long list of drugs: human growth hormone, Depo-Testosterone, undetectable steroids known as "the cream" and "the clear," insulin and Clomid, a drug for female infertility sometimes used to enhance the effect of testosterone.

The documents, many with Bonds' name on them, are dated from 2001 through 2003.

Bonds, who hit a record 73 homers in 2001, said Anderson told him the substances were the nutritional supplement flaxseed oil used as a rubbing balm for aches and pains. Bonds' attorney, Michael Rains, said the leak of grand jury testimony was an attempt to

smear his client. He also maintained Bonds testified truthfully before the grand jury.

"His statement would be to you if he was standing here, he did not take anything illegal," Rains said.

Even if the substances Bonds took were steroids, he said, they were not banned by baseball at the time and the slugger believed they were natural. Bonds also said the substances did nothing to aid his rise as one of the game's greatest home run hitters, Rains said.

"Barry was tested several times this year and the results of those tests were negative," said Bonds' agent, Jeff Borris.

How this all plays out for Bonds, Giambi and baseball is uncertain.

Bonds could face charges if prosecutors believe he lied in his grand jury testimony. His records might be stained, but his eventual election to the Hall of Fame probably won't be jeopardized. The 40-year-old slugger has 703 homers, behind only Ruth (714) and Aaron (755).

Giambi's testimony could lead the Yankees to terminate his \$120 million contract and allow baseball Commissioner Bud Selig to discipline him.

For baseball, it is stuck in the mud of a scandal that won't go away.

Selig said he's committed to riding baseball off performance-enhancing substances and is calling on the players' association to adopt a stronger drug-testing policy modeled after the minor leagues.

"The use of these substances continues to raise issues regarding the game's integrity and raises serious concerns about the health and well-being of our players," the commissioner said.

Selig didn't take that attitude six years ago when a beefed-up McGwire was tearing through homers. Maybe now, he can persuade the union to change its attitude, too.

Steve Wilstein is a columnist for The Washington Post. He has written about sports for Steve Wilstein contributed to this report.

Chargers have more at stake vs. Broncos this time

BY DAVE GOLDBERG
The Associated Press

The San Diego Chargers didn't expect to be leading the AFC West at this point in the season. And the Denver Broncos probably didn't expect to be trailing the Chargers in the standings.

But that's where the Broncos are, a game behind the NFL's most positive surprise, as they head to San Diego for Sunday's NFC West showdown.

NFL picks

The Chargers are favored by three points over a team that beat them 23-13 in the third week of the season. Since then, San Diego has won seven of eight and is riding a five-game winning streak.

Despite that, Denver could effectively take the division lead

with a victory, which would give them a two-game sweep and the tiebreaker over the Chargers.

The Chargers (8-3) were in a similar position in 2002.

"I know what happened two years ago," quarterback Drew Brees says. "We were sitting here at 8-4 thinking, 'Well, if we just win half of our next four games, we're in the playoffs,' and we lose four straight. I don't think that was the attitude to have."

Brees was held in such low es-

teem after last season that the Chargers got Philip Rivers to be their quarterback of the future.

But their quarterback of the past has been playing so well that Rivers has been sitting. Brees, who will be a free agent after the season, has assured himself of a huge paycheck next season.

The Broncos have been erratic, losing at home in the snow to Oakland last week. The Chargers have been consistent, especially on offense, where they are second

in the NFL with 29 points per game.

Brees is third in passing rating behind Indianapolis' Peyton Manning and Minnesota's Daunte Culpepper. Tough call. ... **CHARGERS 32-28.**

Green Bay (plus 6) at Philadelphia: The Eagles are saying the right things about keeping the momentum going. They'll do the right thing, too. ... **EAGLES 31-21.**

Atlanta (plus 1) at Tampa Bay: The Falcons can become the second team to clinch a division. Kicker Jay Taylor, who replaces Martin Gramatica, keeps them waiting one more week. ... **BUCS 19-17.**

Dallas (plus 7) at Seattle (Monday night): Mike Holmgren is comparing his Seahawks to the 1988 San Francisco 49ers, who went from 6-5 to a Super Bowl victory. Wishful thinking. ... **SEA-HAWKS 21-17.**

Pittsburgh (minus 3) at Jacksonville: The Steelers are due to lose. ... **JAGUARS 16-14.**

New England (minus 8) at Cleveland: Bill Belichick was concerned this week that the Browns scored 48 points. He neglected to say they allowed 58. Maybe that's why offensive coordinator Terry Robiskie is Cleveland's interim coach instead of Dave Campo, his defensive counterpart. ... **PATRIOTS 58-3.**

Tennessee (plus 10½) at Indianapolis: Peyton Manning needs eight TD passes to break Dan Marino's record. ... **COLTS 27-20.**

Houston (plus 6½) at New York Jets: Chad Pennington returns to quarterback the Jets. ... **JETS 20-16.**

Cincinnati (plus 6½) at Baltimore: No 58 points for the Bengals this week. ... **RAVENS 20-9.**

San Francisco (plus 10½) at St. Louis: The Rams get to the fast track. ... **RAMS 45-17.**

Minnesota (minus 7) at Chicago: Chad Hutchinson is the Bears' fourth quarterback this season. ... **VIKINGS 27-7.**

Buffalo (minus 3½) at Miami: Willis McGahey has made Buffalo a lot better. ... **BILLS 20-10.**

Carolina (plus 1½) at New Orleans: Carolina is too banged up to win four straight. ... **SAINTS 30-27.**

New York Giants (plus 2) at Washington: New York's Eli Manning faces another tough defense. ... **GIANTS 3-2.**

Arizona (plus 6) at Detroit: John Navarre goes back to Michigan as the third quarterback to start for the Cardinals. ... **LIONS 20-3.**

Kansas City (OFF) at Oakland: Kerry Collins is good when protected. He will be against this defense. ... **RAIDERS 32-31.**

Last week: 4-12 (spread), 11-5 (straight up).

Season: 84-89-3 (spread), 116-60 (straight up).

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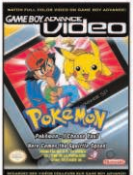
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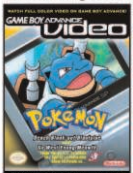
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SPORTS

Utah's Meyer snubs Irish,
accepts job as Florida coach,
Page 29

Scandal was years in the making

Latest revelations about steroids confirm widespread speculation

Baseball's steroid scandal could be seen coming six years ago.

The Olympics have feared the one unfolding now for two decades.

A series of federal grand jury testimony leaks, confessions and new accusations link the San Francisco Giants' Barry Bonds, the New York Yankees' Jason Giambi and Olympic star Marion Jones to steroids distributed by the Bay Area Laboratory Co-Operative.

Steve Wilstein



The revelations are no surprise after years of widespread suspicions that some of the world's greatest athletes have been building better bodies

through chemistry.

Baseball shrugged when Mark McGwire acknowledged using anabolic steroids, an over-the-counter steroid precursor that has since been banned, during his 70-homer season in 1998.

When Jose Canseco and Ken Caminiti, two former MVPs, admitted using steroids and alleged many others were doing the same, baseball still did little. Bullied by the players' association, the sport was slow to set up a drug-testing program that even now does not have random, year-round testing.

That head-in-the-sand mentality has come back to haunt the game and tarnish Bonds' pursuit of Babe Ruth and Hank Aaron's career home run marks.

Reports in the San Francisco Chronicle that Giambi told a federal grand jury he used human growth hormone and steroids, and that Bonds testified he used a clear substance and a cream supplied by BALCO to his trainer, brought quick condemnation of the sport's approach to performance-enhancing drugs. The substances Bonds described are similar to steroids at the center of the scandal.

"It shows the problem is endemic in baseball," World Anti-Doping Agency chief Dick Pound told The Associated Press on Friday.

■ ABC airs interview with BALCO founder Victor Conte, Page 29



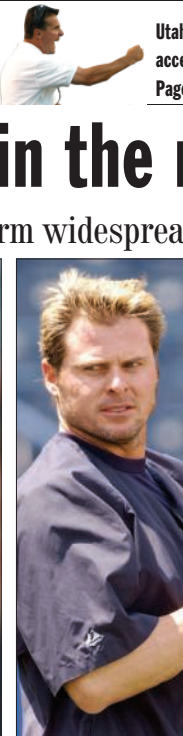
The San Francisco Chronicle has reported that San Francisco Giants left fielder Barry Bonds testified to a grand jury that he used a clear substance and a cream given to him by a trainer who was indicted in a steroid-distribution ring, but said he didn't know they were steroids.



World Anti-Doping Agency chief Dick Pound said that Marion Jones, above, should be stripped of her medals if allegations that she used banned drugs before the 2000 Sydney Games are true.



BALCO founder Victor Conte has said that he watched Olympic track star Marion Jones inject herself with human growth hormone.



New York Yankees' Jason Giambi injected himself with human growth hormone in 2003 and used steroids for at least three seasons, according to his grand jury testimony that was reviewed by the Chronicle.

"It also shows that their so-called efforts to determine whether there was a 'problem' was limited to anabolic steroids with full warnings to everybody, ignoring all the other stuff that's clearly being used, and followed by a set of ludicrous sanctions. It indicates that baseball is not at all serious about this."

There is no shock, either, in BALCO founder Victor Conte's claims that he sat beside Jones as she injected herself with human growth hormone three years ago, the day before a track meet in California. Suspicions have surrounded Jones for years, and she remains under investigation by the U.S. Anti-Doping Agency.

"She pulled the spandex of her bicycle shorts above her right thigh," Conte wrote in a first-person account for ESPN: The Magazine. "She dialed up a dose of four-and-a-half units of growth hormone and injected it into her quadriceps."

Conte said he started working with Jones, at the request of her then-husband and coach C.J. Hunter, before the 2000 Sydney Games, where she won three gold and two bronze medals.

"I started providing her with insulin, growth hormone, EPO and 'The Clear,' as well as nutritional supplements," said Conte, who identified "The Clear" as the designer steroid THG, which could not be detected by tests at the time.

"Victor Conte's allegations about me are not true, and the truth will come out in the appropriate forum," Jones said in a statement to the AP on Friday. "I have instructed my lawyers to vigorously explore a defamation lawsuit against Victor Conte."

The Olympics have been worried about a scandal involving this big star since the Ben Johnson case stained the 1988 Seoul Games.

Jones should be stripped of her Olympic medals if allegations that she used banned drugs before the Sydney Games prove to be true, Pound said.

Jones, however, has repeatedly denied using performance-enhancing drugs, and her attorney, Richard M. Nichols, said Conte is not credible.

Bonds and Giambi also have denied using steroids, but their grand jury testimony last year and reported by the Chronicle this week contradicted what they said in public.

SEE SCANDAL ON PAGE 29

Surprising Chargers face big hurdle in rematch with Broncos

Page 31